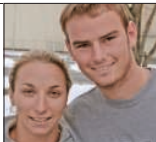


STARS AND STRIPES®

Texas looking for respect in Rose Bowl

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'We're so lucky,' say airman, wife caught in tsunami

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Megan Shelby and Airman 1st Class Chad Shelby



Jerry Orbach of TV's 'Law & Order' dead at 69

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Volume 2, No. 263 © SS 2004 MIDEAST EDITION

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2004

False tip leads to deadly ambush; at least 29 killed

Rebels set off explosives after luring Iraqi police to house Page 3



A careful search doesn't always promise success for troops

Page 4

JOSEPH GIORDANO/Stars and Stripes

A young Iraqi child sleeps while Spc. Jesse LeBlanc searches for weapons in a house near Taji. LeBlanc is with the Black Sheep, soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment attached to the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, both National Guard units. U.S. troops have found that while some patrols can turn up weapons caches and insurgents, the searches can just as often prove fruitless.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Slain deer hunters case: A man accused of shooting six fellow deer hunters to death and wounding two others after being caught trespassing in the woods pleaded not guilty Wednesday.

Chai Soua Vang, 36, waived his right to a preliminary hearing and will stand trial on six counts of murder and three of attempted murder. A judge set a trial date of Sept. 12. Vang has suggested he acted in self-defense and feared for his life, telling investigators the victims fired a shot at him first and berated him with racist slurs.

N.Y. terror trial: A prosecutor told a federal jury Wednesday that the terrorism case against a Manhattan lawyer and two others was essentially about "a jailbreak" in which they helped an imprisoned terrorist feed deadly messages to followers.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew Dember in his closing argument painted all three defendants with the same brush, saying they let blind Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman communicate with overseas terrorists despite prison rules imposed to isolate him.

He asked the jury to convict attorney Lynne Stewart, U.S. postal employee Ahmed Abdel Sattar and Arabic translator Mohamed Youssry in a conspiracy to overcome the government's efforts to keep the still "powerful and influential" Sheikh.

US Airways problems: US Airways is trying to recruit volunteers willing to work for free over the New Year's weekend at Philadelphia's airport in order to avert a repeat of a Christmas fiasco that left the struggling airline with too few workers to fly its planes and process baggage. The request seeks workers only at Philadelphia.

While the volunteers will not be paid for extra shifts, employees will be paid for regularly scheduled work, US Airways spokesman David Castelvetter emphasized Wednesday. Company executives and managers would be taking part in the volunteer program, he said.

Marcos assets: A U.S. appeals court has upheld a lower court's ruling freezing assets of the late Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos that are being held in banks around the world.

In a decision issued Tuesday, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled that the Philippine government, which wants the money, lacks the standing to challenge the freeze.

The order was first issued in 1986 and reaffirmed in 2003 by federal judge Manuel Real, who is presiding over a class-action lawsuit filed by more than 9,500 Filipinos who won a \$2 billion judgment against Marcos' estate in 1995. The award has grown to \$3.7 billion with interest, but none of the victims of the dictatorial Marcos regime have received any money.

Slain pregnant woman: A federal magistrate Tuesday appointed public defenders to represent Lisa M. Montgomery on a charge that she kidnapped a fetus from a pregnant woman and left the mother dead.

Montgomery, 36, made her first appearance in a federal courtroom downtown and spoke barely above a whisper as she answered a few questions from Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge John T. Maughmer.

Maughmer told Montgomery that he had asked two lawyers from the public defender's office to attend the hearing in anticipation that she may have needed legal counsel. He told her he would not ask



Stone for Jesus' brother: The ossuary that reputedly held the bones of James, Jesus' brother, with an inscription in Aramaic "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus" that was discovered in Israel appears to be forged. Israeli police indicted four antiquities collectors and dealers Wednesday, accusing them of running a sophisticated forgery ring that created a trove of fake biblical artifacts, including some hailed as among the most important archaeological objects ever uncovered in the region.

for a plea on accusations against her but wanted to know if she was aware of the charges.

"Yes," she said quietly, acknowledging the accusations of the crime.

FBI counterterrorism chief: FBI Director Robert Mueller on Tuesday named Willie T. Hulon to lead the agency's counterterrorism division, the sixth person to hold the high-profile job since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Hulon, a native of Memphis, Tenn., has been a senior counterterrorism official since April after a two-year stint as head of the FBI's field office in Detroit. Hulon was cleared in February of any wrongdoing after an internal investigation found that three Detroit-area men had falsely accused him of leaking sensitive information to drug dealers.

War on terrorism

Chirac official probe: State prosecutors began a probe Wednesday into suspected wrongdoing by a maverick lawmaker from President Jacques Chirac's party for his failed effort to free two French reporters taken hostage in Iraq, judicial officials said. The investigation of Didier Julia, a lawmaker from the conservative Union for a Popular Movement party, and two alleged associates centers on suspicions that they shared intelligence with a foreign power or group, the officials said on condition of anonymity.

On Tuesday, investigators questioned Julia associates Philippe Brett and Philippe Evanno over their roles in the initiative. They were expected to be placed under investigation — one step short of being formally charged — the officials said.

World

Iran elections: Iran's biggest reform party has chosen a former Cabinet minister as its candidate in the upcoming elections for a successor to President Mohammad Khatami.

Mostafa Moin, a close Khatami ally and former science and technology minister, was the sole candidate of the Islamic Iran Participation Front, though other reformist groups may have their own candidates, party leader Saeed Shariati said Wednesday.

Moin officially accepted the nomination Monday.

Ukraine election protests: Noisy, orange-clad opposition protesters on Wednes-

day blocked Ukraine's government headquarters and prevented Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich from convening a Cabinet session.

Irina Lobanova, a spokeswoman for the Cabinet, said that the meeting would not be held as planned — a decision that prompted the protesters to start abandoning their barricade, which winning presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko ordered Tuesday night to keep up pressure on his rival, who has refused to concede.

Yanukovich also said Wednesday that he would not bow to opposition pressure and resign from his post.

Afghanistan reform: Afghanistan's new defense minister praised his warlord predecessor and pledged to work hard to create a professional national army seen as a key to establishing long-term stability in a nation still reliant on regional strongmen and international troops.

Abdul Rahim Wardak said Afghanistan's National Army, or ANA, needed educated and professional officers to eventually take over security of the vast mountainous country.

Wardak said an ongoing drive to disarm private militias will be completed by March 2005, ahead of parliamentary elections scheduled for April.

Jiang government job: China's former President Jiang Zemin will step down from his last remaining government post in March, the official Xinhua News Agency reported Wednesday.

Jiang, who holds the largely symbolic title of chairman of the Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China, has asked for permission to resign at the next meeting of the nation's legislature, the agency said.

Chavez criticism: An opposition leader accused Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez on Tuesday of attempting to turn the military into a tool of his left-leaning "revolution" and indoctrinating soldiers with anti-American sentiment.

The criticism by politician Gabriel Puerta Aponte came a day after Chavez declared the military an "essentially anti-imperialist force" and announced it would do away with soldiers' camouflage uniforms in favor of new olive green fatigues — similar to those worn by the Cuban military.

Chavez, a former paratrooper commander, urged hundreds of troops in a speech late Monday to take up "an ideological offensive" including "anti-imperialist thought."

Stories and photos from wire services

At least 29 killed in ambush of Iraqi police

Insurgents' false tip leads security forces into deadly explosion

BY DUSAN STOJANOVIC

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Insurgents lured police to a house in west Baghdad with an anonymous tip about a rebel hideout, then set off explosives, killing at least 29 people and wounding 18 in the latest in a series of deadly strikes against Iraqi security forces, police said Wednesday.

The explosion late Tuesday erupted from inside the house in the capital's Ghazaliya district as officers were about to enter, a local police official said. Ten neighboring houses collapsed from the blast and several residents were believed trapped under the rubble. Seven policemen were among the 29 dead.

The police official said the attack was "evidently an ambush" and that "massive amounts of explosives" were used. He said the explosion was apparently triggered by remote control.

The U.S. military said Wednesday 1,700 to 1,800 pounds of explosives appear to have been used. It added that American soldiers and Iraqi troops "worked together through the night to pull potential survivors from the rubble."

Brig. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, assistant commander of the 1st Cavalry Division that controls Baghdad, said the house that exploded was body-trapped.

"The insurgent has no respect for life and an insurgent is anti-Islam," he said.

Hammond said U.S. troops and Iraqi security forces launched an offensive south of Baghdad on Wednesday with an aim of "capturing or detaining or killing insurgents."

Car bombs, ambushes and assassinations killed a total of at least 54 people in the Iraqi capital and across the volatile Sunni Triangle on Tuesday, including 31 policemen and a deputy provincial governor.

The attacks — including one in which 12 policemen had their throats slit — were the latest by insurgents targeting Iraqis working



An Iraqi man stands outside houses destroyed in a blast in west Baghdad on Wednesday. Insurgents lured police to a house in west Baghdad with a tip about a hideout Tuesday night, then set off explosives, killing at least 29 people and wounding 18, police said Wednesday. Seven policemen were among the dead.

with the American military or the U.S.-backed government ahead of the Jan. 30 national elections.

Hammond said the violence is expected to escalate before the ballot.

"We anticipate that the enemy will [continue with] attacks, intimidation, assassinations and other messages designed to destroy life in Baghdad," Hammond said, adding that Iraqi security forces will bear the brunt of providing security for the elections and that U.S. troops will back them up only if needed.

Iraqi forces launched a series of raids Wednesday in Baghdad's northern neighborhood of Azamiya and in the town of Mahmoudiya, just south of the capital, detaining at least 50 suspected insurgents — including several Syrians, the government said. The statement also said an Egyptian citizen, who was captured in Baghdad's central Karrada neighborhood. He had explosives and terrorist propaganda, it added.

The U.S. military said in a statement Wednesday that the Iraqi security guard repelled three separate attacks by insurgents who tried to seize two police stations in Mosul, 225 miles northwest of Baghdad.

Also on Wednesday, a firefight erupted between U.S. troops and militants in the central Iraqi city of Samarra, witnesses said.

There were no reports of casualties. Shiite Muslims, who make up around 60 percent of Iraq's people, have been strong supporters of the elections, which they expect to reverse the longtime domination of Iraq's Sunni minority. The insurgency is believed to draw most of its support from Sunnis, who provided much of Saddam Hussein's former Baath Party membership.

A Defense Ministry spokesman in Baghdad confirmed Wednesday that the Iraqi National Guard — a paramilitary internal security force that has borne the brunt of the anti-insurgency effort — will be merged with the regular armed forces.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Tuesday, at least 1,325 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,040 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is one higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Tuesday.

The British military has reported 75 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 16; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,187 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 931 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No deaths reported. The latest identifications reported by the Defense Department:

■ Army Staff Sgt. Todd D. Olson, 36, Loyal, Wis.; died Monday after being injured Sunday by an explosive in Samarra, Iraq; assigned to the National Guard's 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, Neillsville, Wis.

Government: Two top terror aides arrested

Saddam's trial set to start in early 2005

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Two senior aides of Iraq's most feared terrorist leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, have been arrested, the deputy prime minister said Wednesday.

He also said Saddam Hussein will likely be tried early 2005.

Security forces arrested an al-Zarqawi aide identified as Abu Marwan in the northern city of Mosul, Barham Saleh said, adding that the man is believed to have been responsible for supplies and weapons. Another aide, Reda Bazzyani, reportedly in charge of communications, was arrested in Baghdad.

Al-Zarqawi's group, which recently declared allegiance to Osama bin Laden, is believed to be responsible for numerous

car bombings and beheadings of foreign hostages in Iraq.

Commenting on legal procedures against Saddam, Saleh said the former dictator's trial will likely start soon.

A special Iraqi tribunal handling the case of Saddam and 11 other members of his defunct regime did not say when the trials will start. Saddam and the other defendants appeared in court in Baghdad in July on charges of war crimes and genocide. Saleh also condemned several terror attacks that killed at least 30 Iraqi officers Tuesday, killing at least 30 officers.

He said suspected terrorists had also been arrested in the southern city of Najaf, where a Dec. 19 suicide bombing killed about 50 people. Two of those arrested were from Saudi Arabia and one was from Morocco.

Bush denounces bin Laden's call for Iraqis to boycott January elections

By DEB RIECHMANN

The Associated Press

CRAWFORD, Texas — President Bush on Wednesday denounced Osama bin Laden's call to boycott the Iraqi elections, saying that the balloting marks a crossroads for Iraq.

"The stakes are clear in this upcoming election," Bush told reporters at his Texas ranch. "It's the difference between the ability for individuals to express themselves and the willingness of an individual to try to impose his dark vision on the world, on the people of Iraq and elsewhere. It's very important that these elections proceed."

In an audiotape broadcast Monday, bin Laden called for a boycott of the election and said the Iraqi vote — for a national assembly to write a constitution — is being held under an interim constitution "imposed by the American occupation" and "infidel" be-

cause it did not rely solely on Islamic law.

"Therefore, everyone who participates in this election will be considered infidels," bin Laden said.

The tape surfaced the same day the largest Sunni Muslim political party that had planned to take part announced its withdrawal, saying security was worsening and Iraqis did not understand the political process well enough to vote in Iraq.

Bush said bin Laden's vision stands in stark contrast to one viewed by a vast majority of Iraqis — that freedom of expression and the right to vote should prevail in Iraq.

"His vision of the world is where people don't participate in democracy," Bush said. "His vision of the world is where people kill innocent lives in order to affect their behavior and affect their way of living."

The president said he talked on

Tuesday with the president of the interim Iraqi government, Ghazi al-Yawer, a Sunni, who expressed concern about security in Mosul but said most people in Iraq — Sunni and Shia — want to cast ballots.

The task and hand is to provide as much security as possible for the election officials, as well as for the people inside cities like Mosul to ensure security in Mosul to express their will," Bush told reporters at an airplane hangar at his ranch.

Responding to complaints that U.S. troops are not adequately armed, Bush said his administration has stepped up the production of armored Humvees. He said other vehicles being used in the war that require different armament will be better armed by midsummer 2005.

"What I know is that the Defense Department is working expeditiously with private contractors and our military to get these vehicles armed up," he said.



PHOTOS BY JOSEPH GIORDONO/Stars and Stripes

Above: Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry catalog a weapons cache they seized near Taji, Iraq. Among the find were several automatic weapons, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, a sniper rifle, pistols, dozens of full ammunition magazines and a few mortar sights. **Left:** Spc. Jesse LeBlanc of the Black Sheep searches for weapons in a farmhouse near Taji.

Patrols have varying degrees of success

Some Guard units find weapons near Taji

BY JOSEPH GIORDONO

Stars and Stripes

TAJI, Iraq — In the past two days, two separate patrols from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment seized large weapons caches and detained 10 suspected insurgents.

Over the same two days, several other patrols turned up nothing.

It's part of the day-to-day dichotomy of the U.S. military presence in Iraq: Days can go by without incident, and dozens of searches and patrols amount only to a show of force and deterrence. Other times, targeted raids and search operations end with illegal weapons piled on tables and suspects on their way to detention facilities.

Monday was an example of the latter. Members of the Black Sheep — soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment attached to the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, both National Guard units — rolled back into Camp Cooke with four detainees and weapons they seized from a farmhouse near Taji.

The cache included several machine guns, a sniper rifle, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, pistols, several full ammunition magazines, mortar sights and other materials. Curiously, the weapons were buried in empty missile tubes marked as coming from Kuwait's Ministry of Defense. Soldiers assume the tubes — and possibly the missiles that were once inside — were looted from Kuwait during Iraq's 1990 invasion of that country.

On Tuesday, Company A, 1st of the 69th, made a similar find, taking in six suspects.

At the same time those detainees were being processed, a platoon of Black Sheep soldiers was patrolling in farmland near Taji. Rolling out in Bradley fighting vehicles, the first stop was a small farm compound they'd visited twice before.

The first time was after a roadside bomb detonated along a canal about 100 yards away. The second time, soldiers found parts of a mortar system and confiscated a rifle.

This time, the search turned up nothing but a few spent shotgun shells, which the owner said were from hunting parties who had stopped at his house. Staff Sgt. Joshua Garrett, 25, of Houma, La., ran through a list of questions about weapons, availability of power and fuel and the upcoming elections.

"We are ready to vote, we want that very much," the landowner said, through a translator working with the troops. "We want the elections today, before tomorrow."

But as Garrett asked more questions, it was apparent more work needed to be done.

"Do you know where your polling place is?" Garrett asked?

The man shrugged, "No." The local sheiks, he said, haven't passed on that information.

As the conversation was taking place, Spc. Jonathan Boudreaux, 21, of Raceland, La., and Spc. Jesse LeBlanc, 23, also of Houma, searched the remaining rooms. In two rooms, they found sleeping children, but nothing illegal.



Above: Staff Sgt. Joshua Garrett of the Black Sheep gets ready to dismount from a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and conduct a patrol in the Taji countryside. **Right:** An Iraqi potato farmer works while a U.S. patrol passes through her field while searching for weapons.

Even the patrols that don't turn up weapons serve another purpose: the soldiers said. When they first arrived at Camp Cooke, the base took mortar or rocket fire nearly every day, they said. Since stepping up patrols and "denying the enemy terrain," they haven't had a round land inside the wire in weeks.

E-mail Joseph Giordono at: giordono@pstripes.osd.mil



Gen. does guard duty to give GIs day off

Two soldiers at a remote fire base in Afghanistan recently got a gift from the big guy.

No, not Santa Claus.

For Christmas, Maj. Gen. Eric T. Olson, commander of Combined Joint Task Force 76, traveled from his headquarters in Bagram to Waza Khwa fire base, where he gave two soldiers the day off and pulled their guard duty shift.

"Waza Khwa is one of the more remote and less developed fire bases," Olson stated in an Army news release. "I thought if there were any soldiers who could use a good break by switching with me for a day in Bagram, Waza Khwa was a good place to find them."

Spc. Freddy Barahona, 22, and Spc. Michael Hanes, 21, assigned to the 25th Infantry Division (Light) as infantrymen in Company C, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry

Regiment, briefly met and talked with Olson before departing for Bagram, the release stated.

"Burger King was our first stop when we arrived," said Barahona, a native of Antioch, Calif. "It was great to be able to spend Christmas relaxing, watching some football, picking up a few items at the PX and being able to eat something that reminds us of home."

Olson spent his holiday accompanying several Company C soldiers on a patrol to two nearby villages following Christmas dinner and a brief tour of the base, according to the release.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Stars and Stripes

A 'lousy' T-shirt

When soldiers of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment returned from a nighttime patrol in Baghdad, they found a



Commander of Combined Joint Task Force 76 Maj. Gen. Eric T. Olson talks to soldiers of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment in Waza Khwa, Afghanistan, following a patrol through villages on Christmas Day. COURTESY OF BRADLEY RHEN U.S. Army

"souvenir" on the duty desk inside the company barracks.

Sitting in one corner were two bright-orange T-shirts bearing a familiar phrase back home ... with an Operation Iraqi Freedom twist. In black lettering were the fol-

lowing words: "I surrendered to the Americans and I got this lousy T-shirt."

The shirts brought chuckles from the group, which was scheduled for an early morning patrol less than six hours later.

Jason Chudy contributed to this report.

Raids target insurgents



JASON CHUDY/Stars and Stripes

Capt. Dave Maxwell, commander of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, shows a photo of a jailed insurgent to a man detained in a house during an early Wednesday morning raid in southern Baghdad as a masked Iraqi interpreter translates his questions. The joint U.S. Army/Iraqi National Guard raid targeted three houses containing suspected anti-U.S./Iraqi interim government insurgents. In this house, soldiers discovered two AK-47 assault rifles and dozens of rounds of ammunition. Iraqis are allowed to keep one weapon and one magazine of ammunition. In other houses targeted in raids, a leaflet calling for people to kill Americans was found, as were three vehicles used to fire on U.S. and government forces. Also shown is Sgt. Jonathan Jacobus.

SEALs file suit against AP over photos

BY LEO SHANE III

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Six Navy SEALs filed suit Tuesday against The Associated Press for publishing photos they said revealed their identities and connected them to the prisoner abuse scandals in Iraq.

The men, some of whom are still serving in Iraq, are asking for unspecified damages from the news service. They alleged the photos invaded their privacy and put their lives at risk by showing their faces in a series of photographs published earlier this month.

The photos, which showed the soldiers with hooded and handcuffed prisoners, were obtained by Associated Press reporter Seth Hettner, who also wrote a story suggesting they might show evidence of prisoner abuse.

Stars and Stripes ran the story and one of the photos in its Dec. 5 editions.

U.S. military forces came under heavy scrutiny this summer after the discovery of pictures showing Army Reserve troops abusing Iraqi prisoners at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison.

Navy Special Warfare Command began investigating the six SEALs following the photos release. Spokesman Lt. Taylor Clark said Wednesday that the investigation has been expanded to include the unit's commanders, but so far the Navy has not released any of its findings.

James Huston, attorney for the SEALs, said the photos in this case were taken for documentation purposes and do not show any violation of standard covert operations procedures.

"When this goes to trial, I think everyone will see that they did nothing wrong," Huston said. "But they've been tarred because this reporter said this could be the earliest evidence of prisoner abuse in Iraq."

Associated Press assistant general counsel Dave Tomlin dismissed the charges.

"We believe AP's use of the photos and the manner in which they were obtained were entirely lawful and proper," he said. "We intend to defend ourselves and our reporter vigorously and, we expect, successfully."

In a statement, one of the SEALs called the reporter's actions "completely unnecessary."

"We are very disappointed in this reporter's unprofessional behavior and the fact that he showed such disregard for us, our safety, and the ongoing work we are doing," the unnamed plaintiff said.

"We find this conduct especially appalling in light of the continuing war in Iraq and the fact that we are continuing to put ourselves at risk."

Huston said since the photos were released they have been published widely in the Arab media, putting the SEALs' lives in danger. Several were posted by Cuban government officials on a billboard outside of Guantanamo Bay, comparing the United States military to Nazis.

The lawsuit, filed in California, also accuses the AP of illegally obtaining the photos from a private Web site and names two of the SEALs' wives as co-plaintiffs who suffered emotional trauma as a result of the incident.

In addition to the damages, the suit asks that AP be stopped from republishing the photographs or releasing any related photos.

E-mail Leo Shane at: shane@stripes.osd.mil

Parents of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq take part in humanitarian aid campaign

BY SHAFIKA MATTAR

The Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan — Parents of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq emotionally expressed their opposition to the war and occupation Tuesday during a visit to Jordan as part of a humanitarian aid campaign to help Iraqis displaced by fighting in Fallujah last month.

Fernando Suarez del Solar, 47, from San Diego, California, said he is angry with the U.S. administration "because American soldiers die for the oil and not for a just cause." He accused President George W. Bush of lying about the reasons for the Iraq war.

He said that since the death of his only

son, Jesus, 20, in the opening days of the war in 2003, he has been traveling the United States to speak out against the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

"I am angry because thousands and thousands of Iraqis die as well," said Del Solar, who visited Iraq last year to visit the site of his son's death and listen to Iraqis' needs. "Bush" promised the Iraqis democracy and he is depriving them of their daily needs of electricity, food and safety."

Del Solar and his wife, Rosa, were part of a group of 14 people representing three U.S.-based humanitarian organizations who came to Jordan to send about 5600,000 in humanitarian supplies to Fallujah. Three other parents of killed soldiers were

in the group.

Medea Benjamin, who organized the trip to Jordan, said the delegation would remain in Amman until Jan. 4 to "listen to and understand the real ordeal of the Iraqis and supervise the shipment of the aid to Fallujah."

The group, which arrived Monday in Amman, does not plan to travel to Iraq.

She said the group had already sent to Fallujah three shipments of medical supplies, blankets and toys collected by Global Exchange, CODEPINK and Physicians for Social Responsibility.

A bloody, two-week U.S. military offensive in November wrested Fallujah from the control of insurgents. Most of Fallujah's approximately 250,000 people fled before the assault.

Nadia McCaffrey, 59, of Tracy, California, said she was compelled to help Iraqis by her son, who told her shortly before his death: "I don't know what we are doing here and why we are here."

Patrick McCaffrey, 34, a member of California National Guard 579th Engineer Battalion, was killed in the city of Balad last June.

"My son thought that he was going to Iraq to do something for the Iraqi people. This feeling did not last one week," McCaffrey said.

"I have to live with it and it does so I have to fight the war, that is why I am here," she said with tears in her eyes.

One group of troops return home...

574th Supply and Services Company back in Mannheim after year in Iraq

BY BEN MURRAY
Stars and Stripes

MANNHEIM, Germany — Members of the supply company whose motto is "Warriors, mount up," were finally able to let go of the reins and dismount Tuesday, as the 574th Supply and Services Company returned to Mannheim after a year in Iraq.

More than 80 of the troops deployed with the unit marched into the Mannheim military community's sports arena at about 8 p.m. to the cheers of family members and loved ones.

Many said they were nervous with anticipation about finally having their soldiers home from the war.

"I don't think there will be any words that describe how I'll feel when I see him," said Veronica Apodaca, waiting with her 13-month-old son, Paul Joseph, for her husband, Spc. Paul Apodaca.

For the Apodaca family, the return of the company will be a chance for a father to finally get to know the son born just before the troops left Jan. 8, Veronica said.

"He's only seen a total of maybe four weeks of [Paul Joseph's] life," she said.

Just down the bleachers, another son waited for his father. First Sgt. Larry Tulk arrived just in time to celebrate his 40th birthday on Wednesday.

"It's a good feeling," knowing his father came back safely, said Larry's son, 16-year-old Justin.

Company commander Capt. Natalie Rolling-Edlebeck, said she was extremely proud of her troops' performance in Iraq, where they had the perilous duty of running convoys in the region surrounding Logistics Support Area Anacanda north of Baghdad.

Spread out at four different bases in the Sunni Triangle — the volatile region between Tikrit, Ramadi and Baghdad — the unit transported more than 80 million gallons of fuel and "produced, transported and distributed" more than 200 million gallons of water over the past year, all without losing a soldier, Rolling-Edlebeck said.

"Every commander's dream is to be able to do the mission and bring everyone back alive," she said.

Eleven more members of the 574th are still on their way home from downrange, accompanying the unit's equipment, a rear



Left: Sgt. Jose Sapien, of the 574th Supply and Services Company, greets his wife, Martina, and son, Damian, at the Mannheim military community sports area Tuesday night after a year of deployment in Iraq. Below: Spc. Allison Miller, from the 574th Supply and Services Company, hugs a friend at a welcoming ceremony Tuesday night in Mannheim, Germany, where the unit returned home after a year in Iraq. Miller had come home just ahead of her fellow soldiers, and greeted them at Tuesday's event.

PHOTOS BY BEN MURRAY
Stars and Stripes

detachment spokeswoman said Tuesday. At full strength, the 574th includes 125 troops and 40 vehicles.

For warriors returning Tuesday, the coming days will bring late holiday celebrations and family time, some said, while others will soon be on the road again. At least two spouses said they had plans to take rest-and-recuperation leave in Hawaii with their soldiers in the coming weeks.

Rolling-Edlebeck's son, Benji, 8, said the family had some gifts waiting under the tree at home for his mom, one of which was the boot-shining kit he got for her.

Her husband, Marc Edlebeck, said the wait for his wife has included a lot of anxiety, but now with her home he was more worried about having to take orders around the house again.

Tulk's wife, Anja, said the return of the troops was "the best Christmas present."

"I'm just happy that he got back safe," she said. "After such a long time, you realize how important your spouse is."

E-mail Ben Murray at: murrayb@mail.strips.osd.mil



... just as another heads out for its Iraq deployment

3 companies of 3rd Corps Support Command shipping out again

BY JESSICA INIGO
Stars and Stripes

MANNHEIM, Germany — Three companies within the 3rd Corps Support Command gave their battalion commander a crisp salute and sounded off with a "deployment ready" during a ceremony on Sullivan Barracks Wednesday.

The companies, which all fall under the 181st Transportation Battalion out of Turkey Barracks in Mannheim, will deploy in support of Operation Iraq Freedom 3 for the second time.

The 51st Transportation Company, the 37th Transportation Company (Heavy Equipment Transporter) and the 515th Transportation Company (Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants) will be carrying their colors to prepare for a deployment after the New Year, according to Lt. Col. Tony Cham-

bers, 181st Transportation Battalion commander.

Though each company does different jobs, such as transporting supplies, fuel or heavy equipment within the battalion, each will conduct tactical transportation missions, as well as transport all classes of supply and oversized equipment when deployed.

"Your selfless service is a model for all to follow," Chambers said to the three companies from the podium.

After the ceremony, Chambers said family members are vital to troops being great warfighters and he commended them for "coming out in full force" to support their soldiers.

Chambers also said he is full of pride for the unwavering troops who are prepared to face the dangers of another Iraq deployment. During Operation Iraq Freedom 1, he said, about 70 percent of his

troops faced danger and were attacked on 72 separate occasions. Yet, Chambers said he stood behind his leadership to get the soldiers back safe and sound.

"Commanders, first sergeants, platoon leaders, and platoon sergeants, that trust is yours. Now is the time to put your talents to the test," Chambers said during the ceremony.

One of those leaders, Sgt. William Nowlin, a squad leader in the maintenance platoon, who was extended in June to deploy with his unit again, said despite the fact that he wasn't able to go home, he's still deployment ready and prepared to lead his troops.

The transportation companies are just three out of 14 V Corps companies scheduled to deploy to Iraq this coming year, according to a U.S. Army Europe press release issued in August.

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JESSICA INIGO/Stars and Stripes

Lt. Col. Tony Chambers, commander, 181st Transportation Battalion, speaks Wednesday at a deployment ceremony on Sullivan Barracks in Mannheim, Germany. The three companies leaving from the battalion will not go until after the New Year.

Soldier's blind puppy is named Toby dog

BY CHARLIE COON
Stars and Stripes

The mutt was covered with frost and grime and had a mouthful of broken teeth. There were empty red spots where its eyes should have been.

It was led into the animal shelter by a man using a horse rope. He'd found the dog wandering in a frozen field.

"It was a horror when we first saw him," said Paige Eichmann, who worked at the shelter in Virginia. "When you work at a shelter, you see a lot. We'd thought someone had poked his eyes out. It was very upsetting."

The dog spent a month on doggy desert row, simpering and chewing on his cage, little tears trickling from empty eye sockets. Would-be adopters recoiled at the sight of the mangy mutt.

So can we say it? Heck, yeah. Every dog has his day.

Toby, now the adopted son of Army Maj. Mark and Paige Eich-

elman of Mannheim, Germany, has been voted the 2004 Great American Mutt.

The border collie mix was picked from 1,506 mutts entered in a contest sponsored by Tails in Need Inc., a New York City-based foundation that seeks to raise education on adoption of animals. Judges narrowed the field to 12 semifinalists and five finalists before 5,700 online voters chose Toby as the No. 1 mutt.

Toby received 42 percent of the 13,565 total votes to defeat Lucky, a terrier-dachshund mix from California with huge ears, and three other finalists. The results were announced Dec. 16.

Toby, who is thought to be 4 years old, has come a long way from that day last January when he was found in a field near Charlottesville, Va.

Paige Eichmann was working at the Charlottesville-Albemarle Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals while her husband attended classes at the Uni-

versity of Virginia. The Eichmanns already owned a dog, a cat and a horse, and knew they'd be moving to Germany in June.

"The prospect of adding another animal to the mix and transporting it halfway around the world — I was not thrilled at the idea," said Mark Eichmann, now the officer in charge at the Mannheim Law Center.

But Paige went to work behind her husband's back, arranging for the dog to be neutered as well as an operation to close its eyelids to prevent infection. The veterinarian told her the dog had been born with no eyes.

Mark eventually agreed to a 48-hour trial run for Toby, which the dog failed miserably. He broke through the baby fence in the Eichmanns' kitchen and proceeded to chew up carpet, a pair of ski pants and the electrical cord of an antique clock.

The first couple of days were difficult, Mark said. "He seemed so mild-mannered at the shelter. But he knocked the gates askew and went on a rampage."

"The thought crossed my mind that unless the situation got better quickly, it wasn't going to work out."

Eventually, Toby learned how to avoid a trip back to the pound. He now veers around furniture as if guided by radar and makes friends by licking faces. Even today, the Eichmanns have a 13-year-old shepherd-husky, and



PHOTOS BY RAYMOND T. CONWAY/Stars and Stripes

Toby, a border collie mix who was born with no eyes, plays with his favorite chew toy in Mannheim, Germany, on Tuesday, Toby — who belongs to Maj. Mark Eichmann and his wife, Paige, of Mannheim — was recently voted the 2004 Great American Mutt.

Gertrude, their 17-year-old cat, have welcomed their blind buddy.

As champion, Toby has won a watercolor portrait of himself, a best-of-show ribbon and pet supplies. He'll also be featured in books and magazines about animal adoption.

Best of all, the Eichmanns say, is that the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA has started the Toby Fund, an endowment with a goal

of \$300,000 to pay for adopt-a-pet education as well as surgeries on handicapped strays.

There is an anonymous quote that goes: "To err is human; to forgive, canine."

Mark Eichmann put it another way: "He's having quite an impact for a dog born with no eyes."

For more information on Tails in Need Inc., see www.tailsinneed.com.
E-mail Charlie Coon at: coonc@mail.eastripes.com



The Eichmanns pose for a portrait Tuesday with Toby.

Marine shot to death after police chase

Stars and Stripes

A Twenty-nine Palms Marine who led Los Angeles police on a high-speed chase after allegedly killing a transgender prostitute in Hollywood was shot to death by officers, according to a report in The (Palm Springs, Calif.) Desert Sun.

Lance Cpl. Patrick Edward Vallor, 22, an MP, allegedly pointed a gun at pursuing officers in a McDonald's restaurant parking lot in the Atwater Village area early Sunday, Assistant Chief Jim McDonnell said.

Vallor apparently picked up a female prostitute he believed was a prostitute, investigators told The Desert Sun. When he discovered the prostitute was a man, the Marine allegedly killed the man and dumped the body.

LAPD has declined to release further information about the incident, which is under investigation.

Officers first fired a beanbag round to subdue Vallor, but he pointed the weapon at officers and he was shot, Officer Jack Richter told the paper Monday.

Report: Letter alerted brass of rape allegations

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A "concerned citizen" alerted top Air Force officials about rape allegations at the Air Force Academy six months before an anonymous e-mail set off a media firestorm, Pentagon records show.

The text of a June 28, 2002, letter, which was unsigned, is contained in a newly released report from the Department of Defense inspector general's office, which is still investigating the wide variety Air Force officials handled the author's complaint.

The letter, addressed to Air Force Secretary James Roche, Air Force Chief of Staff John Jumper and other officials, made allegations in capital letters.

"FEMALE CADETS ARE BEING RAPED AND SEXUALLY HARASSED BY MALE CADETS AND ACADEMY OFFICIALS REFUSE TO PROSECUTE THE MALE RAPISTS," the letter said.

The letter alluded to various cases that ended without prosecutions and called for an investigation to be turned over to the FBI. According to the DOD report, the letter was referred to the Air Force inspector general's office, at the time headed by Lt. Gen. Raymond Huot. Huot's office reportedly focused on the specific charge about the officer's alleged comments. No disciplinary action was taken.

Huot said his office's "complaint analysis" was proper. He said investigators found no evidence of wrongdoing by the officer accused of disparaging a rape victim.

The man, whose name was not released, was found by fellow sailors at around 1 a.m., but efforts to revive him were unsuccessful, said 6th Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Cate Mueller.

The U.S. Navy is investigating the incident. From staff reports

Two Marines wed before Middle East deployment

BY MARTIN C. EVANS

Newsday

MINNEAPOLIS, N.Y. — The bride had planned to say her vows in her blue Marine parade uniform, but the groom had a similar sartorial outfit in mind.

So instead, Cpl. Jessica Frugoni of West Babylon wore an ivory-colored satin dress, a strapless design that revealed the Marine Corps bulldog tattoo she wears on her back.

Frugoni, 21, and Lance Cpl. German Cruz, 20, a pair of Marines bound for southwest Asia, promised their lives to each other Monday at State Supreme Court.

"Actually, this is a lot bigger than we had planned," said Cruz, of Voorhees, N.J., right after the couple were pronounced husband and wife in a courtroom crowded by family, friends and well-wishers.

The couple decided to tie the knot less than three weeks ago, after Cruz learned that his planned deployment to Iraq, originally planned for sometime in March, had been moved up to the first days of February. The new bride also will serve in that war-torn region, shipping out for Iraq or Afghanistan in October.

"We realized we really didn't have much time," Cruz said.

Frugoni's relatives said her decision to join the Marines two years ago and her recent plans to get married took them by surprise.

She graduated from West Babylon High School in 2001, then enrolled at Binghamton University.

But after spending a year there, she called home and told her family she had enlisted.

"This is all pretty sudden, so we're all a little in shock," said her father, Charles Frugoni of West Babylon, who served four years in the Marines in the late 1960s and served in Vietnam in 1967.

"They wanted to be married before he went away," he said.

Both Frugoni and Cruz said they joined the military to earn money for college.

The couple, who are stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C., met 17 months ago while stationed in Okinawa, Japan. Military orders separated them soon after, but they were reunited when they were transferred to North Carolina.

They will have another four weeks of married life together before Cruz is scheduled to ship to Iraq.

"I'm nervous, but that's what he signed up for, so I have to be a Marine about it," Frugoni said.

"Of course, there are a lot of people over there getting hurt," she said. "I just hope he comes home safe."

Relatives said they are happy for the newlyweds, but also apprehensive about Cruz's impending deployment.

"It's a little like Vietnam — anything could happen at any time," said Frugoni's father. "But I'm also proud of him. He's doing the right thing."

Navy investigates sailor's death

A U.S. Navy sailor was found hanging from a pipe outside a tool room aboard the USS Emory S. Land early Wednesday morning in La Maddalena, Sardinia, according to a 6th Fleet official.

IN THE WORLD

Nations answer calls to help devastated area

BY LELY T. DJUHARI

The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — Cargo planes touched down with aid Wednesday, bearing everything from lentils to water purifiers to help survivors facing the threat of epidemic after this week's quake-tsunami catastrophe. The first Indonesian military teams reached the devastated west coast of Sumatra island, finding thousands of bodies and increasing the death toll beyond 12 nations to nearly 77,000.

The international Red Cross warned that the toll could eventually pass 100,000. And the race was on to prevent an outbreak of disease and to curb fatal shortages among the millions homeless.

The United Nations reported Wednesday that the world's richest nations have pledged more than \$50 million in aid to victims of the killer earthquake and tsunami.

Spain announced the largest single contribution on Wednesday — 50 million euros. Britain

U.S. military beefs up relief efforts

BY PATRICK DICKSON

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military is adding more ships, planes and people to its relief efforts on behalf of the victims of Sunday's massive earthquake and resulting tsunami.

Joint Chiefs of Staff Director of Operations Lt. General James T. Conway briefed reporters from the State Department on Wednesday. He said that six C-130 aircraft will be operating out of the air base at Utopia, Thailand, south of Bangkok.

"We have committed nine P-3 aircraft," Conway said, "four of which will operate out of Utopia; the other five will operate out of Diego Garcia," a small island in the Indian Ocean that escaped damage from the ocean surges.

"The [USS Abraham] Lincoln Carrier Strike Group... has been diverted now to the Gulf of Thailand," Conway said.

pledged 15 million pounds (\$29 million). Australia said Wednesday it would give an additional \$35 million Australian dollars (\$27.6 million). The United States

pledged \$35 million [see related story on Page 9].

San Lanka said it was getting its first reports of measles and diarrhea. Paramedics in southern

"The Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group was in Guam. It is forging port visits there and in Singapore. To move rapidly to the Bay of Bengal. It is estimated to be on station sometime on or before 7 January. It has seven ships associated with the strike group [and] carries 25 helicopters.

"[There are] 2,100 Marines [and] 1,400 sailors embarked aboard the Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group and 15th MEU [Marine Expeditionary Unit]," he said.

The U.S. Pacific Command, which is in charge of relief efforts, will send five ships with fresh-water producing capability.

A ship with a field hospital will also be sent, Conway said. Two more ships based at Diego Garcia with a 90,000-gallon fresh water capability will be sent as soon as possible.

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have been recovered.

Western Sumatra suffered a double blow in Sunday's disaster, shattered both by the most powerful earthquake in 40 years and perhaps the deadliest tsunami in recorded history.

"Seventy-five percent of the west coast is destroyed and some places it's 100 percent," Maj. Gen. Endang Suwayra, the military commander of the island's Aceh province, said. "These people are isolated and we will try and get them help."

The first military teams reached the devastated fishing town of Meulaboh on Sumatra's coast, and across the coast they found thousands of bodies, bringing Indonesia's toll to 45,268, according to the Health Ministry.

San Lanka on Wednesday listed more than 22,000 people dead. India close to 7,000 — with 8,000 missing and feared dead. Thailand put its toll at more than 1,800. Another 340 were killed in Malaysia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Somalia, Tanzania and Kenya.

Misawa couple survives tsunami while on honeymoon

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan — The Shellys waited a year for a honeymoon they now wish they could forget.

Airman 1st Class Chad Shelby and his wife, Megan, are among the survivors of the worst tsunami in recorded history.

They returned to Misawa on Tuesday night, tan and dazed, with numerous scrapes and bruises and a digital camera that recorded both the happiest of memories and the worst imaginable.

On Wednesday, after checking into the hospital and setting up an appointment to speak with a counselor at Life Skills, the Shellys shared their story with Stars and Stripes.

Married a year, Chad, 20, an entry controller with Misawa's 35th Security Forces Squadron, and Megan, 21, celebrated their anniversary by taking the honeymoon, they never had in Thailand over the holiday.

After a visit to Chang Mai in the north, they were to spend several days in Thailand's famed southern paradise of Phuket. Sunday morning, the day after Christmas, the plan was to go scuba diving. The Shellys were checking out gear and watching an instructional video at a scuba dive shop on a bar on Patong Beach when all hell broke loose.

The first wave, which the couple estimates came ashore sometime after 9:30 a.m. local time, washed far up on the beach, dumping fish and crabs on the sand. The scuba instructor remarked he had "never seen anything like this," Chad said.

About two minutes later, another wave crashed into the scuba shack, trapping Megan and two others in a storage room. "The water filled up to armpit level real quick," Megan said. "It just came in like somebody took a swimming pool, turned it upside down and dumped it on you. We didn't even know this was a tidal wave. We just didn't know."

Chad, who was outside the storage room when the wave hit, was able to climb up on the clay-shingled roof and pry the door



Photo courtesy of Chad Shelby

The Shellys' scuba-diving instructor stands where the scuba shack was before a tsunami ripped it apart. Airman 1st Class Chad Shelby and his wife Megan, pictured right, were sitting in the shop on Patong Beach in Thailand when the tsunami hit. They returned to Misawa Air Base, Japan, this week.

open from above, freeing Megan and the others. Fearing more waves, the pair struggled to get up on another roof, helping, among others, a 3-year-old Japanese boy separated from his parents and a trembling, elderly Frenchman to higher ground. That's when they saw the third wave coming, a towering wall of water about 10 to 15 feet high, Chad estimated.

"I thought 'we have to get higher,'" Megan said. They jumped onto the top of another one-story building farther away from the beach with a few other people. The giant wave crested palm trees on the beach and the Shellys watched with horror as the top of the wave washed over the scuba shack, ripping it apart.

"We just jumped with all we could to the next roof," Megan said.

"That one broke as we jumped onto it,"

Chad said. "We climbed up onto the next roof and waited."

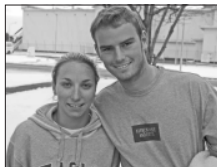
And afraid. That was the last standing building in their reach. The water rose to just below roof level.

"If another wave would have come, we would not have survived," Megan said, estimating that they were about 50 to 60 feet from the beach at that point.

"Everything on the beach was gone," Megan said. "Most of the concrete buildings still stood, but the windows were gone. Every piece of furniture was gone. It was just like a gutted, empty house. There were TVs, computers, shoes, food strewn all along the beach. The water just washed everything away."

The Shellys didn't see anyone else they didn't forget the sounds.

"People screaming for their children, for loved ones. The biggest thing you heard



JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

was the ocean. Everyone was looking for the next wave to come crashing," Megan said.

Chad and Megan waited in the baking sun for three hours with an Australian and a few other tourists on the roof. The water level in the streets below had receded to about 5 to 6 inches. Some locals helped them down and back to their hotel room. They had scratches, bruises and gashes from falling.

Their hotel on Patong Beach weathered the waves, and because they still had their passports and airline tickets, the Shellys were one of the first flights out of Phuket on Monday, the same day they were scheduled to leave.

Four days later, the near-death experience seems like a dream. The young couple simply can't believe they survived.

"I actually thought we were going to die," Megan said.

Megan credits her husband for not panicking when the second wave blew into the scuba shack.

"I was just thinking of how to get higher, just survival I guess," Chad said. "If either one of us had panicked, we would have just died."

A beach lover, Megan said it will be a long time before she sets foot near an ocean again.

"Nobody had any warning," she said. "I just feel so sorry for the people who died, who didn't make it."

"We're so lucky," Chad said.
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Bush announces coalition to help in relief effort

By DEB RIECHMANN

The Associated Press

CRAWFORD, Texas — President George W. Bush announced Wednesday the United States, India, Australia and Japan have formed an international coalition to coordinate worldwide relief and reconstruction efforts for the Asian region ravaged by a deadly earthquake and tsunami.

"We will prevail over this destruction," Bush said from his Texas ranch in his first comments on the disaster Sunday that so far has killed more than 76,000.

Bush said the catastrophe had "brought loss and grief to the world that is beyond our comprehension," and he pledged a multi-faceted response from the United States. In the short-term, the help will include damage assessment teams and U.S. military manpower, such as a Marine expeditionary force followed by long-term rebuilding assistance. He said he'd

also examine a suggestion from German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to consider putting a moratorium on the debt of hard-hit Somalia and Indonesia.

"We'll look at all requests," said Bush, who talked by phone Wednesday morning with leaders from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and India. "We're still in the stage of immediate help. But slowly but surely, the size of the problem will become known, particularly when it comes to rebuilding infrastructure and community to help these affected parts of the world get back up on their feet."

Secretary of State Colin Powell, coordinating relief assistance, telephoned U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Foreign Ministers Nobutaka Machiura of Japan and Alexander Downer of Australia.

Meantime, the International



An airport crewmember prepares relief supplies to transport to Aceh Province at Halim Perdana Kusumah base in Jakarta on Tuesday.

Monetary Fund said it will work with governments affected by the disaster to provide reconstruction and financial assistance. But details have not been worked out, with governments more focused now on dealing with the immediate humanitarian crisis, officials of the financial institution said.

Bush called on Americans to donate cash to relief organizations to augment the response and said he expected several other nations to join the coalition started by the four countries.

He expressed concern the Asian region wasn't prepared with a warning system that foretold the

massive tsunamis and threw his support behind creation of a world-wide system.

Bush also pointedly dismissed a United Nations official's suggestion that rich nations like the United States have been "stingy" in relief efforts. "I felt like the person who made that statement was very misguided and ill informed," Bush said.

Hundreds of Americans remain missing, Bush said. U.S. officials were working hard to locate many more Americans who remain unaccounted for and to provide assistance to those who were injured or displaced in the region.

Despite ruin, forces still on terror watch

By PAUL ALEXANDER
The Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Security forces on alert for possible terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia during the Christmas-New Year holidays are trying to remain vigilant, although their focus has shifted to coping with the tsunami that has devastated regional coastlines.

Dealing with the disaster aftermath across the region with about a dozen countries affected by Sunday's earthquake and resulting tsunami "divides attention," said senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, head of the Philippine National Police's anti-terrorism office.

"We have a certain degree of vulnerability," he added, suggesting terror groups might try to take advantage of the chaos as attackers did recently in his country.

While the Philippines was spared the havoc that its neighbors have suffered this week, it was still recovering from brutal storms that killed over 1,000 people when a large timebomb was found on a bus in Manila on Christmas Eve, just before it was set to explode.

Still, terrorist or militant groups face the same limits on their movements as anyone else because local infrastructure has been destroyed, noted Bradley Allan, a security consultant.

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Waves of history don't top tsunami

BY RANDOLPH E. SCHMID

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The tsunami that claimed thousands of lives across the Indian Ocean had the deadliest great waves in more than a century and probably in modern history.

More than 36,000 people were killed by the tsunami following the explosion of the volcano Krakatau in the Sunda Strait near Java on Aug. 27, 1883. Many estimates of the number killed in that disaster were even higher.

The toll from Sunday's tsunami has now topped 76,800 deaths in 11 nations.

Following the 1883 eruption, waves estimated as high as 90 feet slammed ashore on nearby islands, wiping out coastal communities in what is now Indonesia. That had been the deadliest tsunami of modern times until now.

The earliest description of a tsunami-type wave comes from 479 B.C. in the northern part of the Aegean Sea. Similar waves have been reported worldwide, though they are more common in the Pacific with its earthquake-prone perimeter.

Many historians believe the ex-

plusive eruption of Santorini in the Aegean Sea in 1500 B.C. caused a tsunami that brought widespread devastation to the eastern Mediterranean.

Thousands of coastal residents in Spain, Portugal and North Africa were killed by waves spawned by a 1755 earthquake at Lisbon. Over the centuries, Japan has been the land most plagued by tsunamis, with at least 66,000 deaths recorded there since A.D. 684.

Among the deadliest tsunamis was one that struck Honshu, Japan, in 1896, killing an estimated 27,000.

Many coastal residents were in the streets celebrating a holiday when the wave struck. The next day, fishermen returning home found a scene of devastation, strewn with bodies and ruined houses for miles.

Indonesia has seen more than 50,000 deaths in more than 30 destructive tsunamis over the centuries — not including the most recent disaster.

On April 1, 1946, a Pacific-wide tsunami was generated by a magnitude 7.8 earthquake near Unimak Island in Alaska's Aleutian Island chain.

A huge wave destroyed the U.S. Coast Guard's Scotch Cap light-



Tsunami-stricken areas near the coastal outskirts of Banda Aceh, the capital city of Indonesia's Aceh province, were still water-logged on Monday.

house on Unimak, killing all five of its occupants. The lighthouse was a steel-reinforced concrete structure standing about 90 feet above sea level.

That tsunami reached the Hawaiian Islands about five hours later, obliterating Hilo's waterfront and killing 159 people.

Altogether, 165 people died, including children attending school at Hawaii's Laupahoehoe Point, where waves reaching up to 25 feet struck.

As a result of this wave, two years later the United States established a Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii.

Other notable tsunamis have included:

■ Aug. 16, 1976: A tsunami generated by a quake on Mindanao in the Philippines killed between 5,000 and 8,000 people in the Moro Gulf region.

■ March 28, 1964: A magnitude 8.4 quake in Alaska generated tsunamis that caused damage in southeastern Alaska, in Vancouver Island, British Columbia, and in the states of Washington, California and Hawaii. More than 120 died.

■ May 22, 1960: The largest earthquake — magnitude 8.6 — of the 20th century occurred off the coast of south central Chile. It generated a Pacific-wide tsunami, which was destructive locally in Chile and throughout the Pacific.

Few wild animals killed by tsunami

The Associated Press

YALA NATIONAL PARK, Sri Lanka — Wildlife officials in Sri Lanka expressed surprise Wednesday that they found no evidence of large-scale animal deaths from the weekend's massive tsunami — indicating that animals may have sensed the wave coming.

An Associated Press photographer who flew over Sri Lanka's Yala National Park in a helicopter saw abundant wildlife, including elephants, buffalo, deer, and not a single animal corpse.

Floodwaters from the tsunami swept into the park, uprooting trees and toppling cars onto their roofs — one car even ended up on top of a huge tree — but the animals apparently were not harmed and may have sought out high ground, said Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne, whose Jetwing Eco Holidays ran a hotel in the park.

"This is very interesting. I am finding bodies of humans, but I have yet to see a dead animal," said Wijeyeratne. "Maybe what we think is true, that animals have a sixth sense."



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Court asked to dismiss Yukos bankruptcy

BY KRISTEN HAYS
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Deutsche Bank wants a U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Houston to dismiss the filing of Russian oil giant Yukos for lack of jurisdiction, contending the company has no American presence beyond two small bank accounts and the residence of its financial chief.

In its filing Tuesday, the bank said Yukos' filing was nothing more than a desperate and unsuccessful effort to thwart the auction of its main production subsidiary in an ongoing tax dispute with the Russian government.

Deutsche Bank was one of a consortium of banks — including ABN Amro and Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein — that had intended to fund a \$10 billion to \$13 billion bid by state-owned natural gas company Gazprom to buy Yukoskneftegaz, which produces 60 percent of Yukos' oil and 11 percent of Russia's oil.

The Russian government engineered the Dec. 19 auction to pay off some of the \$27.5 billion in bank taxes it says is owed by Yukos, which the company disputes.

Mike Lake, a spokesman for Yukos' lawyers, said Tuesday the company is confident its Chapter 11 case was filed in the proper venue and that "we are prepared to be back in court defending that



Russia's state-owned oil company Rosneft's headquarters rises above the Moscow River last week. The other shoe has dropped in the mysterious, backroom deals that have quietly handed the Kremlin control over the embattled Yukos oil giant's most important production unit — an apparently secret, no-bid sale to Russia's state-owned oil company Rosneft. Rosneft purchased the virtually unknown BaikalfinansGroup, in a deal Wednesday that appeared to move the unit one step closer to ownership by state-controlled gas giant Gazprom.

position again."

The consortium froze the money after U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Letitia Clark in Houston granted an emergency injunction to block the auction on Dec. 16, two days after the oil company filed its Chapter 11 case.

Yukos claimed the bankruptcy was properly filed in Texas because CFO Bruce Misamore was

conducting company business from his home in Houston, having returned there earlier in December after learning that he may be targeted by Russian authorities if he returned to Moscow. Also, Yukos put \$7 million in two Houston bank accounts to cover legal fees and Misamore's costs.

In granting the injunction,

Clark accepted jurisdiction of the bankruptcy. Her order was upheld by U.S. District Judge Nancy Atlas when Gazprom appealed.

Russia forged ahead with the auction as planned. But an unknown company, BaikalfinansGroup, bought the subsidiary for \$9.4 billion — at least half of which Yukos claims it is worth.

Days later Rosneft, a state-owned oil company that is being folded into Gazprom, bought BaikalfinansGroup.

Some have speculated that Gazprom, an international gas energy titan that's 40 percent owned by Russia, was involved in the winning bid.

Last week Yukos attorneys told Clark the company plans to wait until a sale of its key production subsidiary is finalized next month to seek \$20 billion in damages from the buyer.

On Tuesday the company said it will serve notice in several publications that the auction violated U.S. bankruptcy law, which Yukos says protects all Yukos assets upon the Chapter 11 filing.

Deutsche Bank said in Tuesday's filing that Houston was "a jurisdiction in which Yukos owns no real or personal property and conducts no business operations."

Yukos founder and former CEO Mikhail Khodorkovsky accused the Kremlin of stealing his Yukos oil empire with legal maneuvering in a letter from prison published Tuesday. Khodorkovsky is being tried for fraud and tax evasion, and has been jailed for 14 months.

The next hearing in the bankruptcy is slated for Jan. 6.

A first for 105-year-old

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — A 105-year-old Bosnian granary has been treated by a doctor for the first time in his life, a Bosnian news agency reported Wednesday.

Milja Markovic slipped and fell



Dear US Armed Forces,

I'm thanks go to each of you for your service and sacrifice on our behalf.

As a former soldier, I know the agony of deployment and I understand the hassle of overseas communication with loved ones.

My company has technology that might be of use to you. We provide voice/Internet email services to businesses back home. Since many of you are being extended in theater, I have an offer for you.

To show our support for your service, we are offering a donation of our voice/Internet email service. Your family & friends can leave voice messages which you retrieve via email & Internet to from a computer. This donation is free for two months, after which you are under NO OBLIGATION to extend.

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I urge you to take advantage of this and thank America from those of us who truly support you and your doing. Wouldn't it be great to hear your loved one's voice today?

With all respect,
Kristen Hays
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in her house in a remote mountain village near Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia earlier this week broke her leg, her son Momir told Srna news agency. He said his mother had never been ill in her life.

Markovic was not even registered in the files of the local hospital in Srebrenica, located some 43 miles northeast of Sarajevo.

Markovic is considered to be one of the oldest people in Bosnia, the agency said.

Lethal liquor kills 51

BOMBAY, India — Poisonous liquor sold by an illegal bar in India's financial capital has killed 51 people and sent nearly 100 others to hospital over two days, provoking citywide raids on alcohol vendors, a municipal official said Tuesday.

Police arrested the woman who owned the bar, and 6,800 gallons of illicit homemade liquor have been seized in raids across the city at other illegally run liquor shops, a senior excise officer said on condition of anonymity.

Seventeen policemen have been suspended for their failure to stop the illegal liquor business, Deputy Chief Minister R.R. Patil told reporters.

Liquor poisoning is common in India. To increase potency and quantity, cheap homemade brew is sometimes mixed with methyl alcohol, which can cause blindness or death. The victims are almost always the poor who cannot afford more expensive alcohol.

German sick days down

BERLIN — Germans took fewer sick days this year than ever before, the government said Wednesday, suggesting they are increasingly worried about losing their jobs amid high unemployment, a sluggish economy and a shrinking welfare state.

A survey of sick-day data in January-November showed absences from work at their lowest since the government began collecting data in 1970, the Health Ministry said.

Germans took an average 11.9 sick days during the period, down from 13.5 of all of 2003, the BKK health insurance association said. The 2004 full-year figure was expected to be below last year's, too, the group said.

Musharraf's about-face

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan's President Gen. Pervez Musharraf is planning an important speech to the nation, a senior official said Wednesday, amid speculation he will explain his decision to renege on a promise to step down as army chief by the end of the year.

Musharraf was set to make the address on radio and television Thursday, the senior government official said on condition of anonymity.

Musharraf, who seized power in a bloodless coup in 1999, pledged last December to leave his job as army chief and become a civilian head of state by the end of 2004.

But in recent weeks, Musharraf has said he will go back on his promise.

Israeli drug use

JERUSALEM — Drug consumption in the Israeli military is on the rise, and up to 10 percent of active-duty soldiers are now users, the commander of Israel's military police said Tuesday.

Gen. Mickey Bareil's comments are almost certain to raise alarm in Israel, where the army is highly regarded. Military service in Israel is compulsory, with most males serving three years and females two.

Defector a U.S. worker

SEOUL, South Korea — A South Korean man who had worked for the U.S. military has defected to North Korea, the North's official news agency claimed Wednesday.

Kim Ki-ho, 59, left for the North because he could no longer stand South Korean society where national dignity and human rights are infringed on by the United States, the North's Korean Central News Agency said.

The U.S. military couldn't immediately confirm if any person by that name had worked for them.

From wire reports

Explosions in Saudi capital

The Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Two large explosions shook the Saudi capital late Wednesday, according to officials and TV reports.

The first explosion at about 8:35 p.m. shattered windows and sent debris from the scene of the fire into the nighttime sky near the Saudi Interior Ministry in central Riyadh.

A police official said the second explosion, about an hour later, took place in a center for recruiting emergency troops located five miles from the scene of the first explosion. He said the cause of the two explosions was not immediately clear. Al-Arabiya television reported the second explosion was part of a failed attempt to storm the recruiting center.

There were no immediate reports of casualties in the second. In addition to the Interior Ministry, the Civil Service Ministry, a post office and a luxury hotel are in the area, known as al-Muraba.

The Saudi government has been cracking down on militants since a series of al-Qaida-affiliated attacks on residential compounds in May 2003. The attacks have killed several Westerners.

OPINION

Some Iraqis defy insurgents to seek peace

BY FRED HIATT

The Washington Post

Returning to Washington from Baghdad this month for home leave gave A. Heather Coyne a shock. In Iraq, as chief representative of the U.S. Institute of Peace, Coyne spends her days working with that country's emerging civil society. Back home, she finds Americans astonished to hear there is an emerging civil society—that Iraqis remain involved with rebuilding their country despite all the explosions and killings.

No, this is not a "good news" story. To the contrary, Coyne's experience confirms the deterioration of conditions in Iraq. She is confined, for security reasons, to Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone. Her Iraqi colleagues for the most part dare not visit her there, because terrorists are always watching those who come and go.

Communication is by phone and e-mail.

Recently the institute held a workshop on conflict resolution in Sulaymaniyah, in the relatively peaceful Kurdish north, because the capital is too dangerous. One participant was a Mosul professor who lectures with 10 armed bodyguards in his classroom.

The insurgents, in other words, are succeeding, not only in killing and wounding Iraqis but in impeding Iraqis' ability to rebuild their country and to interact with one another and foreigners.

They're blocking precisely the kinds of interaction a society needs to begin recovering from decades of dictatorship. Worse: The violence is exacerbating sectarian tensions, as the insurgents also intend. So far a remark-

able feature of the war has been Kurdish and, especially, Shiite restraint in the face of provocation from Sunni terrorists. But Phebe Marr, a senior fellow at the Institute of Peace who also recently returned from Iraq, says the sectarian-based anger is worse than she's ever seen.

Yet what strikes Coyne is not the bad news—maybe because she's living in the middle of it—but the fortitude and persistence in the face of attacks of the Iraqis she works with. The Mosul professor keeps teaching. One local leader called the day after he had been shot three times—to ask whether the institute had accepted the people he had recommended to take part in a seminar. Another, whose house was torched, got in touch to make sure Coyne had his new telephone number.

"Yes, they complain" about conditions, Coyne said. But she finds a surfeit of Iraqis who still want to learn what the institute has to teach—about how to peacefully manage religious and sectarian conflict, for example—and are willing to drive 11 or 12 hours through multiple dangerous checkpoints to get to class and practical advice and lessons from other Iraqis.

To the families of American soldiers who are dying or at risk, there may be little comfort in knowing that Iraqis also are dying and hurting themselves at risk. It may help only a bit more to realize that so many of them are committed to making democracy and tolerance work and that their success would be not only the just outcome but in the U.S. national interest. Yet the courage of these ordinary Iraqis is extraordinary.

It doesn't mean, of course, that they'll win.



Iraqis Ahmed and Omar, right, check damage done to their neighbor's Baghdad home last week. A mortar had landed the night before, killing one person and injuring another.

The insurgents are testing the will of Americans and Iraqis alike; if U.S. and Iraqi forces cannot provide some measure of safety for election observers and college professors and women's rights campaigners, it won't matter that a majority of Iraqis want the insurgents to fail.

What is remarkable, though, is that despite the mistakes of the U.S. occupation, and despite the ruthlessness and brutality of the terrorists, so many Iraqis continue to stand up on the other side.

Coyne recently interviewed applicants for Fulbright grants, smart Iraqis willing to risk

an association with a U.S. program because they dream of starting an Internet site, or a government watchdog organization, or a public health project. And when they're asked why they take the risk, they invariably answer, "Because it wasn't possible before."

One applicant was a young Kurdish man who graduated at the top of his high school class but, in Saddam Hussein's Iraq, was not permitted to go to university. He is coming forward now, he told Coyne, "because this is my first best chance." She paused and added, "And maybe his last best chance."

Fred Hiatt is editor of The Post's editorial page.

As world advances, Castro off on his own island

BY MARCELA SANCHEZ

The Washington Post

My mom arrived early for Christmas this year—three weeks ahead of time, in fact. Her visit is something of a holiday ritual, and while it and the nature of mother-daughter dynamics do elicit some tension on my home, I'm grateful she is here.

I'm even more thankful when I consider how petty my concerns seem in comparison with those of people who cannot be with loved ones this season, separated as they are by distance, commitments and even by the whims of a tyrant.

Hilda Molina was one of Cuba's leading brain surgeons when she turned against the Cuban government in 1995, accusing it of trying to make a business of selling fetal brain tissue to foreigners suffering from Parkinson's disease. Molina resigned her seat in parliament and her membership in the Communist Party in protest. For nearly a decade, she has vainly requested permission to visit her son and his family in Argentina, which has no travel restrictions to and from Cuba.

Gloria Amaya is the mother of Miguel Ariel and Guido Sigler Amaya, three of the now-famous 75 peaceful pro-democracy activists whose arrest and sentencing 20 months ago by the Cuban government provoked the ire of the world. The brothers were charged with undermining "the Cuban socio-political project" by running an independent medical facility out of one of their homes. Because they dared treat the poor of a small town in Cuba with drugs manufactured in the United States, Fidel Castro keeps them in jail and their families apart.

There has been no lack of international solidarity shown to those like the Molina-Amaya families. And both the hard-line and what is sometimes called soft diplomatic strategies employed by the international

community have elicited responses from Fidel Castro—but not the kind that have significantly mitigated the plight of Cuban dissidents.

Argentine President Nestor Kirchner would like to believe that a policy of engagement is the way to soften Castro. Early this year, when the United Nations voted to censure Castro for his dreadful human rights record, Argentina abstained.

But when the opportunity came to cash in on the soft approach, Castro did not respond in kind. Despite diplomatic efforts that included a personal letter from Kirchner asking Castro for a simple "humanitarian gesture," to let Molina visit her son and meet her Argentinean grandchildren, Castro refused. According to Molina, an immigration officer told her she couldn't leave Cuba because her "brain is a national patrimony."

Washington rejects soft diplomacy, of course. Those who attempt to engage Castro

run the risk of "humiliating themselves" or appearing "complicit" in Castro's abusive regime, said Roger Noriega, assistant secretary of state for the Western Hemisphere.

If the State Department thought there was a remote chance for a compromise, a U.S. official said last week, it would try it. But Castro leaves the Bush administration on option but the hard line. The result is a virtual stalemate that has put Washington in the unfortunate position of keeping or strengthening harsh policies—including new travel restrictions to the island that also keep families apart this holiday season.

Tragically, this is the nature of policy with a tyrant. Unable to deal substantively with Castro, foreign leaders are constantly pushed to the fringes, so far away from any truly effective interaction or policy-making that what does occur borders on absurdity.

Most recently, Washington and Havana have been engaged in a battle over Christ-

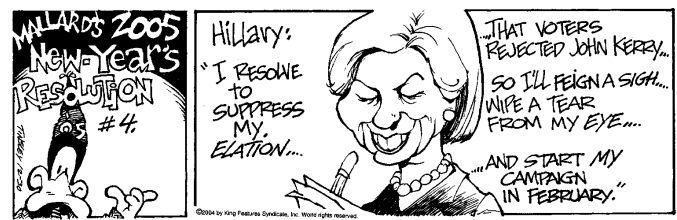
mas lights. The head of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, James Cason, has decked the grounds with a flashy display that includes a snowman, a Santa Claus and a huge number 75, a not-so-subtle reminder of the most recent victims of Castro's repression. Castro retaliated by placing billboards near the Interests Section with images of Abu Ghraib, swastikas and a "Made in the USA" sign.

In the most absurd of outcomes, Argentina opted not to recall its ambassador to Cuba for consultations on the best way to repudiate Castro's inflexibility over Molina. Instead, Kirchner fired the ambassador and the foreign ministry's chief of staff.

Molina, Amaya and their loved ones are pawns in a game that Castro has had more than four decades to master. Their stories and the stories of those who intend to help them remind us that there remains within our midst a type of injustice we seem impatient to confront.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



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IN THE STATES

Rain still pounding California

BY JOHN ANTCAK
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — More wet weather spread across California early Wednesday from a powerful Pacific storm that already had dumped record rainfall, spawned highway-blocking mudslides and shut off power for thousands of homes and businesses.

Several major routes remained closed in Southern California.

Northbound U.S. 101 was closed for about 20 miles because of a slide in Santa Barbara County, and snow shut down Interstate 5 at Tejon Pass north of Los Angeles. On Tuesday, the weather caused hundreds of crashes.

Heavy snow and high wind were possible Wednesday in the Sierra Nevada of Northern California. Locally heavy rain also moved into southern Nevada and parts of Arizona.

Los Angeles measured 5.55 inches of rain Tuesday, the most on record for any December day and the most for any time of the year since Jan. 26, 1956, when 5.71 inches fell, according to AccuWeather, which compiled National Weather Service data.



Los Angeles County firefighters Sally Ortega, left, and Eddie Arguelles escort an unidentified woman from her stranded car in Harbor City, Calif., on Tuesday, after a fierce storm flooded the area.

The city's wettest day on record was March 22, 1938, with 5.88 inches. The weather service started keeping records in 1877.

Twelve to 13 inches of rain fell Tuesday in the Figueroa Mountain area of Santa Barbara County, and in parts of Ventura County, officials said.

The wind-driven rain was blamed for power outages that blacked out more than 100,000

customers Tuesday in Southern California.

On Monday, San Francisco was hit by more than 3 inches of rain and Marin County got more than 7 inches. Wind gusting to more than 60 mph knocked out power to 80,000 customers in the Salinas area south of San Francisco.

Three deaths were believed to be linked to the weather, including a man who apparently tried to surf in the storm's high waves.

FDA approves new, powerful painkiller

BY LAURA MECKLER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Patients who suffer severe chronic pain and are no longer helped by morphine will soon have a new option.

The Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday approved the first in a new class of drugs that blocks the nerve channels responsible for transmitting pain signals. It will be marketed as Pril and should be available by the end of January.

"When you've taken all the kinds of pain medication that there is and you still have pain, that is a very frightening situation," said Dr. Lars Ekman, president of research and development for the drug's Ireland-based manufacturer, Elan. "When you have that kind of pain, there is nowhere to go."

The drug is part of a new class known as N-type calcium channel blockers. It is known chemically as ziconotide.

Morphine is standard treatment for severe pain from cancer, AIDS, amputations and other sig-

nificant illnesses, but its effects eventually wear off and the dosage must be increased. At some point, many patients switch from taking medication by mouth or by injection to a microinfusion pump implanted under the skin that delivers drugs directly into the fluid surrounding the spinal cord.

Ekman said 35,000 to 50,000 Americans have these pumps now. The FDA approved Pril for patients who are already using these pumps but not getting effective relief from them or who cannot tolerate the available treatments.

There are side effects, and the FDA was including a "black box" warning — the government's strongest warning of a ban.

Side effects may include dizziness, drowsiness and altered mental status, with patients confused at times.

The idea for the drug came from a South Pacific snail called the Conus magus, which paralyzes its victims with venom after capturing them, the company said. Researchers set out to learn how to develop a drug based on this venom and eventually copied the amino acid sequence.



Jerry Orbach

'Law & Order' star dead at 69 of cancer

BY FRAZIER MOORE
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Actor Jerry Orbach, who played a sardonic, seint-all cop on TV's "Law & Order" and scored on Broadway as a song-and-dance man, has died of prostate cancer at 69, a representative of the show said Wednesday.

Orbach died Tuesday night in Manhattan after several weeks of treatment, Audrey Davis of the public relations agency Lippin Group said.

When his illness was diagnosed, he had begun production

on NBC's upcoming spinoff "Law & Order: Trial by Jury," after 12 seasons playing Detective Lennie Briscoe in the original series. His return to the new show had been expected early next year.

On Broadway, the Bronx-born Orbach starred in hit musicals including "Carnival," "Promises, Promises" (for which he won Tony Award), "Chicago" and "42nd Street."

Earlier, he was in the original cast of the off-off-Broadway hit "The Fantasticks," playing the narrator. The show went on to run for more than 40 years.

Among his film appearances were roles in "Dirty Dancing," "Prince of the City" and "Crimes and Misdemeanors."

Orbach is expected to appear in early episodes of "Law & Order: Trial by Jury," for which he continued as Briscoe in a secondary role, when the series premieres later this season, Davis said.

"I'm immensely saddened by the passing of not only a friend and colleague, but a legendary figure of 20th century show business," said Dick Wolf, creator and executive producer of the "Law & Order" series, in a statement.

"He was one of the most honored performers of his generation. His loss is irreplaceable."

In a 2000 Associated Press interview, Orbach said the role in the acclaimed "Law & Order" brought him "wonderful security," rare in the life of an actor.

He said he didn't know "where I stop and Lennie starts, really. I know he's tougher than me and he carries a gun. And I'm not an alcoholic."

"I know I wouldn't want to be him," Orbach summed up. "I guess THAT'S where I stop and he starts."

Author and activist Susan Sontag dies

BY HILLEL ITALIE
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Susan Sontag, a leading intellectual and activist of the past half century who influenced the way many thought about art, illness and photography, died Tuesday. She was 71.

Sontag died Tuesday, said Esther Carter, a spokeswoman for Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan. Her son, David Rieff, said the cause was complications of one of the deadliest forms of leukemia. Sontag had suffered off and on from cancer since the 1970s.

"I knew Susan since 1962 and I know how much she suffered and how brave she was fac-

ing her illness," fellow author Carlos Fuentes told The Associated Press in Mexico City.

Tall and commanding, her very presence suggested grand, passionate drama: eyes the richest brown; thick, black hair accented by a bolt of white; the voice deep and assured; her expression a severe stare or a very smile, as if amused by a joke only she could tell.

She wrote a best-selling historical novel, "The Volcano Lover," and in 2000 won the National Book Award for the historical novel "In America." But her greatest literary impact was as an essayist.

Her 1964 piece, "Notes on Camp," which established her as a major new writer, popularized the "so bad it's good" attitude toward popular culture, applicable to everything from

"Swan Lake" to feather boas. In "Against Interpretation," this most analytical of writers worried that critical analysis interfered with art's "incantatory, magical" power.

She also wrote such influential works as "Illness as Metaphor," in which she examined how disease had been alternatively romanticized and demonized, and "On Photography," in which she argued pictures sometimes distance viewers from the subject matter. "On Photography" received a National Book Critics Circle award in 1978. "Regarding the Pain of Others," a partial refutation of "On Photography," was a NBCC finalist in 2004.

Sontag was deeply involved in politics and campaigned for human rights. From 1987-89, she served as president of the American chapter of the writers organization PEN.



Susan Sontag

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Club faces fine

GA ATLANTA — The mayor is threatening a country club with up to \$90,000 in fines for refusing to extend spousal benefits to the partners of gay members.

Mayor Shirley Franklin said in a letter to the Druid Hills Golf Club that the club violated Atlanta's human rights ordinance, which requires businesses to treat domestic partners registered with the city as married couples.

Franklin said she is ordering the city solicitor to fine the club \$500 a day for up to six months — a total of \$90,000 — unless the rule is changed. The solicitor will decide when the fines will begin.

Windy business

MA BOSTON — Town leaders in the Cape Cod community of Yarmouth have long been on record opposing the wind farm proposed for the waters off its beaches, even passing a resolution two years ago expressing their disapproval for the plan to erect 130 wind turbines in Nantucket Sound.

But the Yarmouth Board of Selectmen also quietly negotiated with Cape Wind Associates for a raft of benefits worth millions. If the \$700 million project gets federal and state approval, underwater transmission lines would come ashore in Yarmouth and tie into the electrical grid.

"We did it essentially to protect Yarmouth," said Suzanne McLaughlin, chairwoman of the Board of Selectmen. "We don't have a say in the actual wind farm, whether its going to happen or not."

Botulism sales banned

FL PORT LAUDERDALE — Two doctors and their Arizona company were barred from selling an unapproved botulism toxin believed to have paralyzed four people who used it instead of Botox, the popular anti-wrinkle treatment.

Doctors Chad Livdahl and Zarah Karim, of Toxin Research International Inc., do not have government approval for the "use, sale, marketing and promotion" of the toxin for treating wrinkles, according to a statement from U.S. Attorney Marcos Jimenez in Miami.

An emergency restraining order against the company and doctors also covers three sister companies: Powder Inc., The Cosmetic Pharmacy Inc. and Z Spa Inc.

Language barrier

VT BURLINGTON — Advocates for Vermont's growing number of foreign language interpreters say the workers need legal protection so they won't have to testify in court about their jobs.

Sylvia Delcastillo-Alzamora, a Spanish-English translator, says testifying about her work "would be betraying the ethics of the profession."

Professional interpreters adhere to a code, she said, that prohibits them from publicly discussing or offering opinions about their conversations with clients.

Currently, Vermont law offers foreign-language interpreters no protection from being called as witnesses in cases in which they were first asked to translate words from



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

one language to another.

Suspected pot in trailer

AR VAN BUREN — After he ran from police twice, authorities have arrested a Massachusetts man who is accused of carrying 27 packages of suspected marijuana nested in bales of hay inside a horse trailer.

State police say Everton Garriques was a passenger in the vehicle pulling the trailer, which also contained two horses. More than 800 pounds of suspected marijuana was found in the Christmas Day stop.

Arkansas State Police Cpl. Olen Craig stopped the pickup truck for speeding and having a license plate light, an ASP dispatcher said.

Man survives fall

OH MEDINA — A man whose car plunged 30 feet off a highway overpass and landed wheels down in the snow-covered median between lanes of freeway traffic escaped with only minor injuries.

"The front air bag deployed and right after that I felt a floating sensation," Michael Doner said. "I thought, 'I'm either dreaming or I'm falling.'"

Doner, 60, of Medina, was making the three-hour drive to visit his mother on Christmas when a car skidded into his and a second car

slammed into him, sending his car over the railing of the bridge over Interstate 71 about 30 miles southwest of Cleveland.

Doner had a broken collarbone and cracked ribs, and was sent home the fall "six hours after the fall."

"I'm very lucky," he said.

"The guy upstairs was looking out for me."

Elvis' backwash

NC BELMONT — Wade Jones likes Elvis, but he insists he's just a casual fan.

That's why, after watching a grilled cheese sandwich thought to be embedded with the image of the Virgin Mary fetch \$28,000 on eBay, he decided to part with three tablespoons of water from a cup he says Elvis Presley used during a concert.

"It's one thing to be an Elvis fan, but then you tell them you have this cup and water and they think you're a fanatic," he said. "I'm not like the people bidding on this water."

Jones was 13 when he went to see the aging Elvis in February 1977 at the old Charlotte Coliseum, which is now Cricketer Arena. He saw the pop icon drink from the cup and, after the show, asked a police officer for it.

As proof of its authenticity, Jones provides photos of Elvis during the concert in which cups can be seen.

Found after 23 years

CA SACRAMENTO — A vintage 1963 Ford Fairlane stolen 23 years ago from Greenville, S.C., has turned up some 2,600 miles away in California.

California Highway Patrol officers called Terry and Robin Smith to tell them authorities had recovered the vehicle.

"What a wonderful gift at Christmastime — after 23 years to receive news that they'd found our car," Robin Smith said.

Someone brought the car into the CHP's San Bernardino office for inspection. A sharp-eyed officer noticed the car's identification number didn't match and began investigating.

CHP's Lt. Greg Williams said authorities don't believe the people who brought the car in had anything to do with the theft.

Smith said the car was a wedding gift from her parents, but the couple have not decided whether to bring it home or sell it in California.

Ferret recovery efforts

AZ PHOENIX — Endangered black-footed ferrets are reproducing more and surviving longer in the wild in Arizona than they have since recovery efforts began nearly a decade ago, wildlife biologists say.

Biologists found 28 ferrets in the last two years in Arizona that were born in the wild — more than double the number found during any two-year period since a reintroduction program began in 1996.

"The success in Arizona is great," said Mike Lockhart, a ferret recovery coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"If it continues along the same path, it could quickly become a self-sustaining population."



Horsing around

Horses play in their pasture at Sweet Tree Farm in Dummerston, Vt.



Mill in the mist

Smoke rises from the International Steel Group steelmill in Sparrows Point, Md.



Supporting the arts

Workers with Premier Outdoor Enterprises Inc. support exteriors as they work on a billboard for the Kansas City Ballet in Kansas City, Mo.



Surf's up Thomas Chapman of Long Beach, Calif., sits on the sand south of the Seal Beach, Calif., pier as he rests between rides on his body board.



Little big shot Matthew Witt, 1, looks at the hoop as he plays with a basketball in Carey Park while enjoying the day with his parents, Michael and Debra, in Hutchinson, Kan.



Wind riders Three monk parakeets brace themselves against a stiff breeze as they perch on a wire in Surfside, Fla.

Surrogate of 3 at age 55

VA RICHMOND — A 55-year-old woman acting as a surrogate for her daughter gave birth to triplets.

Tina Cade, who already had three children, delivered the babies by Caesarean section at Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital.

She had carried the babies for her oldest daughter, Camille Hammond, who suffers from endometriosis, a condition affecting the lining of the uterus that makes it difficult to become pregnant.

Hammond and her husband, both doctors at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, had tried for four years to become pregnant.

Cade started hormone treatment last winter, and in the spring she underwent test-tube fertilization. Three embryos were implanted and all three survived.

"We didn't plan for triplets," Cade said recently. "I thought we would be blessed with one. It was quite a surprise."

Christmas mail stolen

ND FARGO — Police say mailboxes were pried open on banks of mailboxes in at least 19 apartment buildings on this city's south side over the holiday, probably looking for money in Christmas cards.

Authorities say the thieves gained access to the mail of more than 100 tenants. They're still trying to determine how much was stolen.

Woodlands preserved

VT BRATTLEBORO — A group of townspeople has raised the money needed to buy 31 acres of woodlands in the heart of the town that will be preserved as a popular area for hikers and cross country skiers.

Ownership of the land was transferred to the nonprofit Windham Foundation and the Vermont Land Trust, and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board holds an easement on the land.

"For the past 20 or 30 years, the land has been unofficially used for hikes and nature walks," explained Tom Marten of Brattleboro, a member of the group Friends of the Western Avenue Woodlands, which formed last year to conserve the land. "This is the land that ought to be conserved so it can continue to be used."

With little street-side frontage and plenty of hilly and rocky areas, the land was not prime for development, although Marten said it is excellent for recreational activities such as biking, walking and nature viewing.

The land — which was mostly pasture just more than 100 years ago — is known to have plenty of deer, birds and some aquatic life.

Weed grower sniffed out

CO BOULDER — A bank teller's nose led authorities to a substantial marijuana-growing operation.

An employee at the First National Bank of Colorado called authorities after processing several cash deposits that reeked of the illegal weed. The Boulder County Drug Task Force followed up the tip with a search of a home that resulted in the discovery of more than 6 pounds of packaged marijuana and 270 plants and pieces of plants.

Michael Bruce Bliss, 30, was ar-

rested at the home and has been charged in the case. Bliss frequented the bank weekly, according to a search warrant, with deposits of \$20 bills in amounts of \$800 to \$1,500.

Fluoride fight

AR LITTLE ROCK — A fight is brewing over a legislator's suggestion that the state's water supply be fluoridated.

Rep. Tommy Roebuck said he may introduce a bill to require all communities to fluoridate their water.

Opponent Sherry Johnson, president of the Arkansas Health Freedom Coalition, said, "If you want fluoride, go to the dentist and get fluoride."

School's board selection

AL AUBURN — A panel reviewing 30 names to fill a single vacancy on the Auburn University board of trustees expects to select its choice by Feb. 1, when the Legislature meets.

The five-member trustee selection panel has begun interviews for the at-large vacancy. The Alabama Senate will vote on their choice.

Election baby welcomed

NH MERIDITH — A couple who stopped at Town Hall to vote just hours before the birth of their son have been rewarded for their loyalty by President Bush, who penned a personal note welcoming the baby.

Kim Dixon waited in the car while her husband, Shawn, dropped off their absentee ballots on Nov. 2. Tyler McPherson, born at 6:43 p.m., weighing in at 9 lbs.

"In the late stages of labor, our only entertainment was watching the election returns," Shawn Dixon said.

In the days before Tyler's birth, Dixon had drawn a portrait of the president, framed it and mailed it to the White House with a letter thanking Bush for keeping America safe and telling him about the baby.

"We wanted to do something to say thank you. We were concerned about bringing a baby into the world. He's the guy making us feel safe," Dixon said.

Schools to combine

WA EVERETT — Five Christian schools are combining to create a new school system in Snohomish County and north Seattle.

The schools have more than 1,200 students. By combining resources, school officials hope to offer more specialized classes such as advanced placement courses for college-bound students.

Hot line shut down

RI PROVIDENCE — The state's AIDS hot line is going dead after 18 years.

It has experienced less demand as people seek information elsewhere. The hot line received up to 5,000 calls a year until the mid-1990s but only about 500 this year.

Callers will instead reach a national hot line operated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

Emmerich judging in Berlin

Roland Emmerich, the director of "Independence Day" and "The Day After Tomorrow," will head the jury at the Berlin Film Festival in February.

Eleven films already have been selected to run in the festival's main competition. They include "The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou," a new comedy from Wes Anderson, and "Les Temps qui changent" (Changing Times), directed by Andre Techine and starring Catherine Deneuve and Gerard Depardieu.

A festival statement last week said Emmerich, a native of Germany, would head the jury that will award the top Golden Bear prize, but gave no details of its other members.

Organizers already have announced that the world premiere of French director Regis Wargnier's "Man to Man," a historical adventure epic that stars Joseph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas, will open the 2005 festival — its 55th edition — on Feb. 10. The event closes Feb. 20.

Jet Li injured in tsunami

Action star Jet Li injured his foot as he protected his daughter from tsunami waves that flooded his home in the Maldives, Hong Kong newspapers reported Tuesday.

Li, who played the villain in 1998's "Lethal Weapon 4," was with his daughter in the hotel's lobby Sunday when huge waves gushed into the hotel, the Apple Daily newspaper reported, quoting a friend vacationing with Li.

He slightly injured his foot while picking up his daughter, the report said. Ming Pao Daily News reported Li struck his foot against a floating piece of furniture.

Li made his name in Hong Kong as a martial arts film star before moving on to Hollywood. His screen credits include "Romeo Must Die" and "Hero."

Gayheart steels up for play

Actress Rebecca Gayheart, who gained popularity as the "Noxzema girl" in the skin care company's ads, has joined the cast of "Steel Magnolias," opening on Broadway in April.

Gayheart, 32, appeared on the TV show "Beverly Hills, 90210" in the 1990s. She has more recently been seen on the FX series "Nip/Tuck" and Showtime's "Dead Like Me." Her movie credits include "Scream 2" and "Urban Legend." She will play bride-to-be Shelby, the role portrayed by Julia Roberts in the 1989 movie version of Robert Harling's play, it was announced Monday.

Also in the Broadway cast is Delta Burke as Trudy, the owner of a Louisiana beauty parlor, which is where "Steel Magnolias" is set. The production, directed by Jerry Moore, begins preview performances March 15 at the Lyceum Theatre and opens April 4.

'Fat Albert' fears tye casting

Kenan Thompson, who plays the title role in the new "Fat Albert" movie, hopes he doesn't get typecast.

"You always gotta watch yourself when you're playing a character as an iconic character because you don't want to be trying to audition for something else and all anybody wants to do is 'Hey! Hey! Hey!' ... and kick you out of the audition," Thompson recently told reporters, according to AP Radio.

The live-action film, directed by Joel Zwick, is based on the animated TV series that comedian Bill Cosby created in the 1970s about adolescents growing up in Philadelphia. Thompson said he wore a form-fitting fat suit to play the role.

"I had all this belly to get around and a little more booty, but you know it was cool," the 26-year-old actor-comedian said.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



Emmerich



Li



Gayheart



Thompson



AP

Flying high again

DiCaprio hits screen with latest epic, 'The Aviator'

BY DAVID GERMAIN

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Leonardo DiCaprio likes to think he and buddy Martin Scorsese share at least some of the obsessive fixations of Howard Hughes, the subject of their latest collaboration, "The Aviator".

■ Living through a mammoth project when it looks like it might capsize, as DiCaprio did with "Titanic," which went on to become the biggest modern blockbuster.

■ Becoming so engrossed in a story it occupies years of your life and requires a massive resurrection of another era, as Scorsese did with "Gangs of New York," which took 25 years to develop and a colossal construction job to re-create 19th-century Manhattan.

"The Aviator" screenplay looked them from the start, with an early sequence detailing Hughes' fanatic devotion to his World War I film "Hell's Angels." Using his own money, Hughes spent \$4 million on the 1930 film, at the time the biggest movie budget ever, and reshot it for sound after deciding the silent era was finished.

"I think Marty and I can both relate to, when we read the script, we both immediately read 'Hell's Angels, year three.' We were like, wow, we know what that's like, being a part of an epic that just goes on and on and on," DiCaprio said in an interview with The Associated Press. "Persevering against all the odds and trying to make the best film, being a perfectionist, trying to make the story the best it can be."

"I certainly can't imagine taking things to the level Hughes did in his life. It's too exhausting. The man led 20 different lifestyles in one life."

"The Aviator" casts DiCaprio as Hughes during his scappie years from the late 1920s to late 1940s, when he fought the Hollywood establishment and pushed bounds on sex and violence in film, dated parades of starlets, and oversaw creation of the world's biggest and fastest planes.

Cate Blanchett co-stars as Katharine Hepburn, whom Hughes dated for three years. Kate Beckinsale plays Ava Gardner, another of his longtime companions.

The film hints at the Hughes of later years, the cloistered multimillionaire with long hair and fingernails, terrified of germs and locked in a hotel room surrounded by tissue boxes.

It's the image of the freakish recluse that DiCaprio, 30, grew up with when it came to Hughes, who died in 1976. Then about eight years ago, DiCaprio read a biography of Hughes and became fascinated with the scope of his achievements and the conflict between his public image as a playboy and daredevil and private life as a man increasingly paralyzed by phobias.

DiCaprio initially developed "The Aviator" with Michael Mann, who decided against directing it after back-to-back film biographies in "Ali" and "The Insider." The actor pitched the script to his "Gangs of New York" director Scorsese, who quickly signed on for "The Aviator."

Like Howard Hughes, who loathed being under the public lens at Hollywood premieres, DiCaprio has learned to live uneasily with tabloid celebrity.

"I hate being bothered by paparazzi. Anyone would," DiCaprio said. "The flip side of that coin, I'm one lucky bastard, and I have nothing to complain about. People are dealing with problems around the world that are infinitely more complicated and much more extreme than anything having to do with a couple of crummy photographers. I'm not one to complain about it too much."

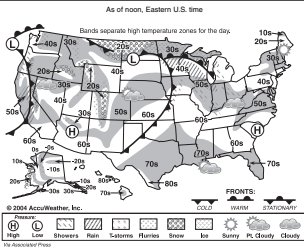
DiCaprio shuns questions about his personal life, tersely denying recent rumors that he split with his girlfriend, Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bündchen.

When it comes to his Oscar prospects on "The Aviator," DiCaprio is more forthcoming than most actors, who tend to insist demurely they never think about awards. After his academy recognition for "What's Eating Gilbert Grape," DiCaprio has been snubbed since, missing out on nominations with "Titanic," "Catch Me If You Can" and "Gangs of New York," films that put his co-stars in the Oscar race.

Does he feel overlooked by his peers come Oscar time? "Mmm, maybe," DiCaprio said. "But you do these films and you throw it out to the public, and it's up to everyone else to figure out whether they think it is worthy of something like that or not ..."

Ultimately, DiCaprio said his greatest reward is to be part of films that might stand the test of time and bear repeated viewings decades down the line.

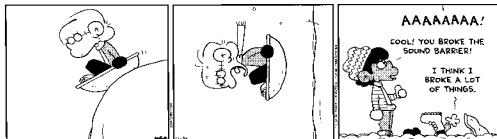
"There are certain films out there, that's the reason I get so excited about doing movies, that hopefully I can be part of a film that people 50 years from now will be able to still want to watch. That's what's exciting to me."



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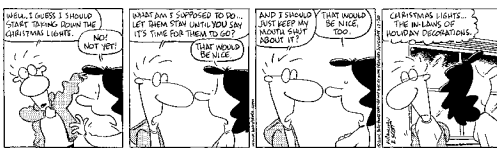
Footrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



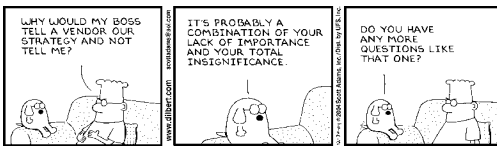
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



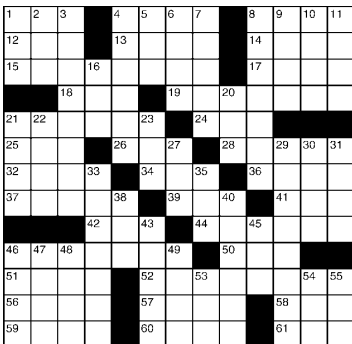
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Helgenberger series
- 4 Palatine Hill site
- 8 Parlor piece
- 12 "2001" computer
- 13 Squared
- 14 2004 hurricane
- 15 INS prey
- 17 Fit in snugly
- 18 "Yankee ..."
- 19 Raspy-voiced comedy legend
- 21 Spangle
- 24 Pack away
- 25 "Charlie's Angels" actress
- 26 Grippe constantly
- 28 Threesome
- 32 Dry
- 34 Pod denizen
- 36 Farrell co-star
- 37 Olympian's prize
- 39 Central
- 41 Flea hastily
- 42 Peruke
- 44 34-Across, e.g.
- 46 Seinfeld's style
- 50 Clear the tables
- 51 Spheres
- 52 Springfield site
- 56 Missile shelter
- 57 Cole Porter's "Let's ..."
- 58 Aussie hopper
- 59 Portent
- 60 Viewfinders?
- 61 "Uh-huh"

Down

- 1 Actor
- 2 McBride
- 3 Mule of song
- 3 Not easily cashed in
- 4 Get back
- 6 Pinocchio play
- 7 Follow
- 8 Oscar winner as Maggio
- 9 Microwave
- 10 In record time
- 11 Chip in a chip
- 16 Outback bird
- 20 Snitch
- 21 Bridge coup
- 22 Green land
- 23 Entry on
- Garfield's agenda

Answer to Previous Puzzle



12-30

CRYPTOQUIP

RESH QA GAX DSZZ LAXM
XPZXDJG LVZZARF REA
ESKKVP XKAP CXODJFSPQ?

CXSHHMA FOPJA!
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF I RAISE SOME ALCOHOL UP OVER MY HEAD, HAVE I SUCCESSFULLY LIFTED MY SPIRITS?
Today's Cryptquip Clue: C equals Q

Finding love at funeral not rare

Dear Abby: I just finished reading the letter from "J.H. in Yonkers," who fell in love on a friend's funeral. I agree with you, Abby, it's a great story. Mine is similar.

I dated Mike for 2½ years and then we broke up. For eight months I couldn't forget him. On a whim, I called his mom during one of the many Midwest blizzards of 1979. She told me her mother had died and the visitation was the next night. I made it through the snowdrifts to the visitation—the only non-family member because of the weather. Mike invited me to the house afterward.

The next day, I met him in the church parking lot, where he told me guiltily he had whistled all the way to his grandmother's funeral because he knew I'd be there! We knew we were meant to be together and we were convinced his grandmother had a hand in it.

If we can believe that there are

pennies from heaven, we can believe someone was looking out for J.H. and her love, Mike and I will celebrate our 25th anniversary in a few months.

— Ruth in Rock Island, Ill.
Dear Ruth: Your letter gave me goose bumps. Thank you for sharing your beautiful story. Read on:

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: My parents met at a funeral 80 years ago.

My mother, who always hated funerals, went because the deceased had been a close friend of her mother's. After the service, Mom was very impressed by a tall, handsome, older man she met. The rest is history.

— Esther in Kenmore, N.Y.
Dear Esther: Which proves that sometimes an ending can be a beginning.

Dear Abby: My father died on Dec. 19 the year I turned 20.

Put cluttered keepsakes in storage

Dear Annie: I married my husband, a widower, after we had known each other for five years. I thought I knew what I was getting into, but I was silly.

We are living in the home my husband has been in for over 30 years and because he is unlikely ever to leave, Six years ago, his daughter, "Tina," quit school and left home. Her bedroom was now deep in a terrible mess that took me months to clean. Her things now are stored in our house. Also, Tina's mother died 12 years ago, and many of her items were kept for Tina. In fact, nearly all the storage in the house is filled with things belonging either to Tina or her mother. Tina wrote me a letter, saying she did not want any of these things and to give them away. She is building a small home, and although I'm not sure it will have any space for this mass of items, I am reluctant to assume

Annie's Mailbox



she won't want them in the future. I suspect she will someday change her mind.

I want to get the things that belong to my stepdaughter and her mother out of the house. It annoys me to have them stored in every nook and cranny. We even have his late wife's wedding dress, even though Tina says she never will want it.

I feel like a tenant in this house. Please help.

The Newer Wife
Dear New Wife: You've been quite patient with Tina, but since you are reluctant to part with these things, perhaps you can put them in a storage facility so your home is no longer a warehouse. When Tina's house is finished, go through these things again with her. If she still wants nothing, by all means, give her mother's keepsakes to someone in the family who would value them and the rest to a worthy charity.

My mother was only 48, and I had four younger brothers and sisters. Our family was devastated that Christmas. All the neighbors knew about it and were very nice to us.

A girl up the street invited my two sisters and me to her birthday party on Jan. 11. She said if we didn't come, she would come and get us.

The girl who was giving the party had a younger brother, who had asked his best friend, "Jim," to the party. Jim and I started dating that week. We knew by summer that we would marry and were engaged the next year.

On Oct. 22, we celebrated our 27th wedding anniversary.

When people ask how we met, I am not reluctant to tell them. I had never dated anyone before I met Jim—so I say that Jim was sent from heaven to me.

— Maureen in Toronto
Dear Maureen: And I believe it.

Letters for this column—with your name, phone number and address—should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69404, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at: <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby> Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ECKER

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

RICLY

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

HOYNUL

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

HEABED

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

www.jumble.com

Answer: A □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ **A** □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Yesterday's Jumbles: WALTZ EVENT PARDON SPORTY
Answer: She spurned the printer's advances because he—WASNT HER TYPE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

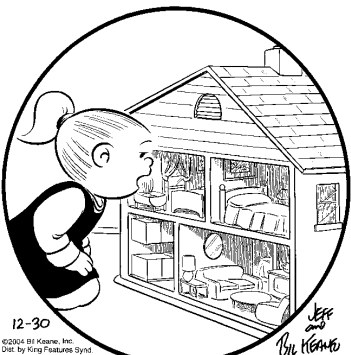


WHAT SHE WAS LEFT WITH WHEN HER HAIR CAME OUT THE WRONG COLOR.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Family Circus



12-30

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"I wish I had an elf who could get in there and dust."



Dennis the Menace



The Far Side



Non Sequitur



BRIEF REVELATION THAT WE PROBABLY DIDN'T FINISH SECRETARY ENOUGH

In God's kitchen

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Postseason game is a big feat for Buffs

By JOHN MARSHALL
The Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. — For a team that sets its sights on Big 12 and national championships, finishing just above .500 and earning a trip to midlevel bowl shouldn't be something to get excited about.

But consider what the Buffaloes have been through this year — sex and recruiting scandals, coach Gary Barnett's suspension, a wild ride through the schedule — and it's easy to understand their satisfaction from a 7-5 season and a spot in the Houston Bowl against Texas-El Paso on Wednesday.

"It has been a rough year for this team and for this program," offensive lineman Sam Wilder said. "Things did not always go the way we wanted them to this year, but this team has kept fighting."

The long offseason threatened to overshadow anything the team might accomplish on the field.

A grand jury investigated claims by nine women who said they were sexually assaulted by players or recruits since 1997. No charges were filed, but three of those women sued the university and two of the suits are still pending.

A separate investigation concluded sex, alcohol and drugs were used as football recruiting tools by player-brothers, though there was no evidence university officials knowingly sanctioned the activity.

Barnett was suspended for three months after making insensitive remarks about two of the women, including former kicker Katie Hnida shortly after she said she was raped by a teammate in 2000.

The school overhauled its recruiting procedures, but the headlines didn't stop once the season started.

Embattled athletic director Dick Tharp resigned in November and chancellor Richard Byrny followed suit earlier this month, though both said it had nothing to do with the scandal. A fraud investigator hired by state prosecutors is also looking into the school's fund-raising practices, including two football camps run by Barnett.

Somehow, the players were able to fight off the distractions and win games.

"Everybody has gone through a lot, and the smoke has cleared and we're still standing," Barnett said. "The university, athletic department and administration have had a very successful year — and the football team."



Colorado coach Gary Barnett has been suspended and his team has endured sex and recruiting scandals this year. But the Buffaloes (7-5), who play UTEP in the Houston Bowl on Wednesday, will finish 2004 with a winning record.

It's hard to argue.

Colorado started off the season superbly, winning three straight games for the first time since 1998. That was followed by four losses in five games, seemingly ending Colorado's chances of earning a bowl bid.

But the Buffaloes won three straight games to end the regular season, beating rival Nebraska 26-20 on the road to earn a spot in the Big 12 championship game.

Winning the Big 12 North might have said more about the weakness of the division than Colorado's skill — the Buffaloes were crushed 42-3 by Oklahoma in the title game — but it was quite an accomplishment for a team not given much of a chance to succeed.

"I've never had a young team that has achieved as much as this team has," Barnett said. "If these kids can take this kind of approach when they're older, then they've really got a lot ahead of them."

As for Barnett, his year had nearly as many ups and downs as his team.

Barnett survived his suspension with his job intact after a university investigation, but the pressure didn't let up.

After being praised for holding his team together early in the season, Barnett heard the call for his job during the midseason slide. It didn't help when Tharp, one of Barnett's biggest supporters, stepped down.

But just when things seemed the worst, Barnett turned his team around and got them into the Big 12 title game and a bowl, earning conference coach of the year honors.

"I really haven't thought about me very much," Barnett said. "In the throes of the battle, you don't start feeling sorry for yourself. You worry about the people you're responsible for and getting them out of the mess they're in."

Gators, Canes renew rivalry in Peach Bowl

By MARK LONG
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Dwayne Dixon knows as much as anyone about the Florida-Miami series.

He played for the Gators from 1980-83, splitting four games against the Hurricanes. He was a student assistant for two years following his college career, then returned to become the receivers coach in 1990 and has been there since then.

Now that the once-bitter rivalry has been renewed — the Hurricanes will play the Gators for the fourth time in five seasons Friday night in the Peach Bowl — Dixon believes the in-state rivalries should try to meet more often.

It could happen.

It fired up the Hurricanes for years. It really was one of the great rivalries in college football," he said. "And it has a chance to return to that if we get Miami on the schedule. I know that's tough to do, but it would be good for everyone — the fans, the players, the coaches."

Florida athletic director Jeremy Foley and Miami athletic director Paul Dee are awaiting the outcome of proposed legislation that would allow a 12-game schedule each season. If it passes — arguments are expected to be heard in April — the Gators and Hurricanes will play a home-and-home series every few years.

They won't play annually because both programs would like to use the extra game to play other elite teams. But they would resume a heated series that lost some of its luster during the 13-year break.

The Peach Bowl could help, too.

"It means the world to us right now," Miami guard Chris Myers said. "This is our national championship game."

The Florida-Miami series began in 1938 and grew into a rivalry in the early 1950s, when the teams began playing for a wooden canoe. The 192-foot canoe made from a 200-year-old cypress log would be ceremoniously brought out at halftime, displayed on the sideline and then presented to the winning coach.

Became Miami's final game of a series that was played every year from 1944-1987, the canoe sits in the

school's sports hall of fame. It has been somewhat forgotten.

But memories of the series might never be erased.

There was the infamous "Florida Flop" in 1971 — when Florida defenders laid down and let the Hurricanes score, allowing the Gators to get the ball back and quarterback John Reeves to break Jim Plunkett's record for NCAA career passing yards.

Miami coach Fran Curci refused to shake hands with Florida coach Doug Dickey after the game. Making mat-

ters worse, several Gators headed to the East end zone of the Orange Bowl and jumped into a pool that housed Miami Dolphins mascot Flipper during NFL games.

It fired up the Hurricanes for years. The rivalry grew even more intense in 1980, when Florida fans — angry that the Gators trailed Miami 28-7 late in Gainesville — threw punches at the Hurricanes, who were headed to the Peach Bowl.

Miami coach Howard Schnellenberger was so furious he ordered a field goal to add to the final margin.

For the Gators, the game never hit the heights of other Southeastern Conference rivalries such as Auburn, Georgia and Tennessee — or reached the crescendo of the annual meeting with Florida State.

So Florida dropped the Hurricanes in 1980 because it wanted to play a "more national schedule," then promptly replaced them with Montana State. Miami fans accused the Gators of pulling out because the Hurricanes were dominating them — on field and on the national scene.

With Florida's recruiting efforts suffering in talent-rich Dade County, former coach Steve Spurrier wanted the Hurricanes back on the schedule in 1980. But with the SEC expanding, there was no room.

After 13 years, Florida and Miami renewed the rivalry in the 2001 Sugar Bowl. Just a few nights before Miami's 37-20 win, a handful of players from both teams — most notably Miami's Bryant McKinnie and Florida's Alex Brown — mixed it up on Bourbon Street.

The series took another turn last season, when Brock Berlin rallied the Hurricanes from a 23-point, third-quarter deficit to a 38-33 victory.

NFL Hall of Fame Challenge

STARS AND STRIPES

OCNUS .com

Top Scores for Week 16

Best Overall Scores

256	yahtzee	Misawa AB, Japan
252	769-SAF-T	Camp Henry Wiesbaden
250	davidaleshire	1st Infantry Division
248	derekc40	Leighton Barracks
248	BigRedOneAMLO	HHC 121 Signal
248	chrisbo269	Yokosuka
246	PilgrimPride	unit 20239
244	hunkothus	DYNCORP
242	BIG DRE	86 mgx/qg
242	Razorbacks	

2828	Jack58	
2812	Joe Corleone	
2810	ghc2137 ar	
2808	Who Cares	
2796	STEELFROGWOOD	
2782	Bone-Daddy	
2774	Jaguar One	
2774	SPIELMEISTER 04	
2772	cowboy48	
2766	PilgrimPride	

422	ABS RAF Croughton	
	Mifan	
	hnc 2/37 ar	
	MNF-1 DCSFER	
	MAQ-12	
	HQ, USAREUR, G2	
	DoDDs	
	Hohenfels	
	Rhein Main AB	
	Yokosuka	

See websites for official game rules.

Check this space every Thursday during the entire NFL season for the weeks Top Scores and Best Overall Scores during the NFL Challenge.

Texas out to make statement in Rose Bowl

BY RALPH D. RUSSO

The Associated Press

Bowl games often define a team's season.

A victory over a quality opponent to end the season can validate a successful year. Finishing off with a loss in a high-profile matchup can tarnish all that was accomplished to get there.

Several teams playing on the first few days of 2005 have much to prove, but none more than Texas.

The Longhorns meet Big Ten co-champion Michigan on Jan. 1 in the Rose Bowl. Rarely has a 10-win team received so much grief for earning a major bowl bid.

New Year's bowl picks

When the Longhorns slipped into the Bowl Championship Series ahead of California, they became this year's BCS villain. It wasn't necessarily fair, but Texas coach Mack Brown brought much of the criticism on himself by pleading for his team's publicity.

So the Longhorns either can quiet the critics and justify their first BCS bid with a victory, or lose and be dismissed as unworthy of the lofty status.

Brown doesn't believe his lobbying has put any extra burden on the Longhorns.

"Not at all, our team's the fourth-best team in the country based on a combination of things, and I told them I did anything, they deserved it, and they got in because they deserved it," Brown said. "All I did was ask people to look. Really and truly, I feel like we should have been in three of the last four years, and I wish I would have made people more aware then, too."

Texas isn't alone in playing for its reputation.

Wisconsin followed victories in its first nine games with two ugly, lopsided losses.

The Badgers play Georgia in the Outback Bowl on Jan. 1, trying to avoid a three-game losing streak that will make a once-promising season seem like a huge



RB Cedric Benson, left, has rushed for 1,764 yards and 19 touchdowns this season for Texas, which is a much-maligned 10-1 team heading into the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1.

disappointment.

Pittsburgh and West Virginia will be looking to repair the tarnished image of the Big East.

The Panthers play Utah in the Fiesta Bowl. The unbeaten Utes are the first team from a non-BCS conference to reach one of the four big-money bowl games, but it's Pitt that comes in as more than a two-touchdown underdog.

"All I can say is, the Big East is a very

competitive conference," said outgoing Pitt coach Walt Harris, who is headed to Stanford.

West Virginia plays Florida State in the Gator Bowl, also trying to snap a two-game losing streak. The Mountaineers entered the season ranked in the top 10 and heavily favored to win the watered-down Big East. Instead, they lost to Boston College and Pitt and had to share the league crown.

The Seminoles (8-3), meanwhile, are

coming off a loss and trying to avoid their third season in four years with at least four losses.

And of course, Auburn will try to complete a perfect season in the Sugar Bowl against Virginia Tech, and give voters in the AP poll an alternative No. 1 to the winner of the Orange Bowl between Southern California and Oklahoma.

"We feel like national champs no matter what the polls say," Auburn All-American cornerback Carlos Rogers said.

"They can't take that away. We don't have to have the recognition from the polls."

The picks:

Saturday, Jan. 1

Cotton Bowl

Tennessee (plus 3) vs. Texas A&M: Vols have lost past two bowl games by combined 57-17. **TENNESSEE 33-28.**

Outback Bowl

Wisconsin (plus 7) vs. Georgia: Bulldogs go for third straight double-digit win season. **GEORGIA 20-14.**

Gator Bowl

Florida State (minus 8) vs. West Virginia: Rematch of 1982 Gator Bowl, won 31-12 by Niles. **FLORIDA STATE 24-10.**

Capital One Bowl

Iowa (plus 6½) vs. LSU: Nick Saban's last game as LSU coach. **LSU 20-17.**

Rose Bowl

Michigan (plus 6) vs. Texas: Wolverines' last Rose Bowl victory was 1998. **MICHIGAN 23-17.**

Fiesta Bowl

Utah (minus 16½) vs. Pittsburgh: Both schools have new jobs waiting for them. **UTAH 48-28.**

Monday, Jan. 3

Sugar Bowl

Auburn (plus 6½) vs. Virginia Tech: Tigers' playoff game against tough Hokies. **AUBURN 28-13.**

Tuesday, Jan. 4

Orange Bowl

Southern California (minus 3) vs. Oklahoma: But Trojans look even better against Sooners. **USC 34-21.**

Edwards stakes his claim as Michigan's best receiver

BY LARRY LAGE

The Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — When Braylon Edwards won the Biletnikoff Award as the nation's best receiver, the senior was asked if he thought he was Michigan's best receiver ever.

Edwards said he was.

It's hard to argue with him, though it's difficult to compare him with Anthony Carter because he played more than 20 years ago when Bo Schembechler rarely chose to pass.

Edwards, the first Wolverine to win the Biletnikoff Award, set season school records with 87 receptions for 1,221 yards receiving this year.

With 12 receiving touchdowns for Michigan, his career total of 36 trails Carter's Big Ten record by one. Edwards already has broken Carter's school marks with 242 catches and 3,432 yards receiving.

He also owns Michigan records with three receptions in 37

straight games, an active streak heading into the Rose Bowl against Texas, and 16 100-yard receiving games. And, he's the first Big Ten player with three 1,000-yard receiving seasons.

"I think my legacy is pretty much complete," Edwards said. "I think I've done everything I wanted to do, and we've accomplished everything as a team. The one thing now is to win the Rose Bowl. That would be the finishing touch."

Edwards is blessed with a 6-foot-3, 206-pound body, sprinter's speed and the ability to out-jump defensive backs for the football — or rip it away from them with brute strength.

"He just goes over defenders and grabs touchdowns," Texas safety Phillip Geiglar said. "It looks like a lot of people had him in single coverage. I don't think you can do that."

Michigan State found that out this season.

Edwards caught two TD passes

late in the fourth quarter to help Michigan erase a 17-point deficit in just 5:44, and grabbed a third TD in triple overtime to beat the Spartans.

The Longhorns held Oklahoma's Mark Clayton, the best receiver they faced, to just three receptions for 19 yards this season.

Edwards butted heads with Michigan coach Lloyd Carr in the past because of his loquacious ways, occasional tardiness and a cell phone that rang during a team meeting when he was a freshman, a mistake that still bothers Edwards.

But Carr and Edwards got along just fine this season, and the coach didn't hesitate to praise his star receiver.

"Braylon certainly has had a great career," Carr said. "I'm extremely proud of what he's done this season and the leadership that he's given our team and the example that he's set on the field. He's certainly one of the great football players we've had at Michigan. I don't think there's any doubt about that."

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Bowls scoreboard

Tuesday
Iowa St. 17, Miami (Ohio) 13
 Miami 10
 Iowa St. 7 0 7-17

First Quarter
 IS—Hicks 4 run (Culbertson kick), 4:04.
Second Quarter
 IS—Fg Culbertson 23, 10:55.
 MI—Clemens 28 pass from Baer (Parsen-
 hian kick), 25.

Third Quarter
 MI—Smith 7 run (kick failed), 8:12.
Fourth Quarter
 IS—Kock 1 run (Culbertson kick), 13:02.
 IS—43-0.

Individual Statistics
Passing—Iowa St. 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240.
Rushing—Miami 9-46, Clemens 8-22, Baer 7-159, Meyer 2-122, Kock 3-7, Byrthe 1-6, Davis 1-5, Coleman 1-2, team 3-minus 6.
Receiving—Miami 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240.
Defensive—Miami 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240.
Special Teams—Miami 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240.

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Defensive—Miami 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240.
Special Teams—Miami 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240, Iowa St. 20-44, 240.

Notre Dame 21
 Notre Dame 21
 Oregon 14 7 7-21

First Quarter
 OSU—Gillett 12 pass Anderson (Serna kick), 9:24.
 OSU—Newton 11 pass from Anderson (Serna kick), 5:41.

Second Quarter
 OSU—Haines 11 pass from Anderson (Serna kick), 7:59.
 OSU—Fazio 31 pass from Quinn (Fitzpatrick kick), 5:08.

Third Quarter
 OSU—Walker 5 run (Fitzpatrick kick), 2:40.
Fourth Quarter
 OSU—Newton 18 pass from Quinn (Fitzpatrick kick), 12:52.
 OSU—Wright 7 run (Serna kick), 3:15.

Individual Statistics
Passing—Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240.
Rushing—Oregon 9-46, Clemens 8-22, Baer 7-159, Meyer 2-122, Kock 3-7, Byrthe 1-6, Davis 1-5, Coleman 1-2, team 3-minus 6.
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Defensive—Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240.
Special Teams—Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240.

Individual Statistics
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Rushing—Oregon 9-46, Clemens 8-22, Baer 7-159, Meyer 2-122, Kock 3-7, Byrthe 1-6, Davis 1-5, Coleman 1-2, team 3-minus 6.
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Defensive—Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240.
Special Teams—Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240, Oregon 20-44, 240.

Anderson lifts Oregon St. over Notre Dame

QB throws 4 TDs in Insight victory; Irish lose seventh straight bowl

By BOB BAUM

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Derek Anderson enhanced his future with a big final game for Oregon State — against a Notre Dame team whose epitome to the Ty Willingham era was just another loss.

Anderson threw for 358 yards and tied an Insight Bowl record with four touchdown passes Tuesday night in the Beavers' 38-21 victory over the Irish.

The senior quarterback completed 28 of 45 passes with no interceptions in a game that should help his prospects in the NFL Draft. Anderson said he would take the next term off to stay in Arizona and hone his skills.

He plans to play in the Senior Bowl.

"Then we'll see where football takes me from there," he said. "Hopefully, I can continue my career."

The Beavers' 7-5 win six of their last seven, largely because Anderson overcame his reputation for throwing interceptions about as often as he threw for touchdowns.

"If you look at us over the last six or seven weeks, it was just a great, great job of quarterbacking," Oregon State coach Mike Riley said. "I think Derek probably made a lot of money in the last few weeks."

Anderson moved ahead of Steve Stenstrom to No. 2 on the Pac-10 career list with 11,249 yards passing. Only Carson Palmer (11,818) had more.

The Irish (6-6) spoke repeatedly about winning the game for Willingham, fired at the end of the regular season. But Sammie



Oregon State quarterback Derek Anderson was 28-for-45 for 358 yards and four touchdowns in the Beavers' 38-21 victory over Notre Dame in the Insight Bowl on Tuesday night in Phoenix.

Stromter's 52-yard punt return and Derrick Doggett's blocked punt helped Oregon State to an early 21-0 lead.

"The short field position the first half just killed us," Notre Dame interim coach Kent Baer said. "The blocked punt and the punt return, you take that away, and it's a much closer game — but that's all part of it."

Brady Quinn threw two touchdown passes as Notre Dame twice cut the lead to 10 points, the last on an 18-yard throw to Rhema McKnight that made it 31-21 with 4:52 left.

The Irish's onside-kick attempt backfired and left Oregon State at the Notre Dame 28. Dwight Wright's 3-yard TD run with 3:19 left sealed the victory.

The Irish lost their seventh consecutive bowl game. Notre Dame's last postseason victory was in the Cotton Bowl at the end of the 1993 season.

Oregon State improved to 2-0 against Notre Dame. Five seasons ago, the Beavers pounded the Irish 41-9 just down the road at the Fiesta Bowl.

The Irish pass defense crumbled in three consecutive sea-

son-ending losses, allowing 14 TD passes against Pittsburgh, Southern California and Oregon State.

The Beavers had TD drives of only two, 4 and 45 yards take their early lead, then went 90 yards in 12 plays midway through the second half after Notre Dame had cut the lead to 24-14. Anderson's 1-yard TD toss to Newton capped the long drive, and it was 31-14 with 12:17 to play.

"That was a big drive," Anderson said. "We were talking on the sidelines and said, 'Let's go answer it.'"

With Willingham ousted, and hired as head coach at Washington, the Irish played under Baer, Notre Dame's defensive coordinator.

New Notre Dame coach Charlie Weis, offensive coordinator for the New England Patriots, takes over the Irish program when his NFL season ends.

"I'd be lying if I told you it didn't affect some people," Quinn said. "You try your best, at least as much as you can, and try not to look too far ahead or too far back."

"I think this team dealt with this situation that we were given as good as any team could."

Baer, who might join Willingham at Washington, said it had been an emotional month for the coaches and the players.

"I think there is a definite bond that has been created over this," he said. "That's a great group of young men in Notre, and I'm very proud of how they played, and I can't say enough about them."

The capacity crowd of 45,917 was the largest since the Insight Bowl moved to Bank One Ballpark six years ago. The roof was open at kickoff, but was closed in the first quarter as a light rain fell.

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Iowa State surge continues with win over Miami (Ohio) in Independence

By CHUCK SCHOFFNER

The Associated Press

SHREVEPORT, La. — Steve Hicks burst through holes he had never seen before. Bret Meyer darted and weaved and completed just enough passes to keep the defense honest.

Sometime between the end of the regular season and Tuesday night's Independence Bowl, Iowa State rediscovered its running game.

The Cyclones pounded the ball at Miami of Ohio all night in a 17-13 victory that capped an impressive turnaround — from 2-10 in 2003 to 7-5, a share of the Big 12 North title and a bowl championship this year.

"Our goal at the beginning of the season was to be one of the most improved teams in the country," Iowa State coach Dan McCarney said.

"You have to credit that to our kids for not being denied." They certainly weren't on this night, when Miami came up short in its bid to send coach Terry Hoepner out with a victory.

Hoepner is leaving to become the coach at Indiana, a job he accepted Dec. 17.

"That was as good a football as we have played all year, especially their defense," said Hoepner, whose team lost to Michigan in the second week of the season. "I'm glad I won't see them next year."

Those teams that do play Iowa State can expect to see plenty of Hicks and Meyer.

Hicks, a sophomore, ran 27 times for 159 yards and scored the game's first touchdown on a 4-yard run. Meyer, a freshman, carried a season-high 23 times for 122 yards, set up the go-ahead touchdown with a weaving 23-yard run in the fourth quarter and passed for 114 yards, completing 10 of 28. He was chosen as the game's offensive MVP.

When it was over, the Cyclones had rushed for 285 yards, a school record for a bowl game. They had averaged just 128 yards a game during the season.

"For this game, we put in a cou-

ple of new plays that we saw on film would work," Hicks said. "The offensive line was coming off the ball real well. These are some of the biggest holes I've seen all season. It was just a great job by them."

Hicks ran his season total to 1,062 yards, the eighth time in McCarney's 10 seasons a back has topped 1,000.

"If you look back at the tradition of all the great running backs that have come out of Iowa State ... just to get back to the old ways of what Iowa State rushing used to do, it's great," center Luke Vander Sanden said.

With ESPN's cameras recording the moment, Miami athletic director Brad Bates told the team just before the game the offensive coordinator Shane Montgomery would succeed Hoepner as coach.

If the timing of that announcement was meant to inspire the RedHawks (9-5), it didn't do so right away. Miami fell behind 10-0 before rallying to a 13-10 lead in the third quarter.

Giant-killing Gonzaga strikes, toppling No. 3 Oklahoma State

BY JEFF LATZKE
The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Gonzaga Bulldogs are back in the business of pulling off upsets.

Even with their leading scorer hampered by an ankle injury, the No. 12 Bulldogs beat third-ranked Oklahoma State 78-75 on Tuesday night.

Adam Morrison scored 19 points and J.P. Batista came off the bench for a career-high 18 points as the Bulldogs built a big lead and held off the charging Cowboys down the stretch.

It's the second time this season — and third in 13 months — that Gonzaga upset a team ranked in the Top 3. The team that came out of nowhere to make back-to-back Sweet 16 runs is now showing its might in the regular season.

And this time, the Bulldogs did it with a backup center pushing their offense. Batista, who had

never scored more than 10 points in a game, shot 8-for-9 from the floor to anchor a scoring 57 percent of the game.

The Bulldogs are 2-1 against Top 5 teams this season. Gonzaga beat then-No. 3 Georgia Tech 85-73 on Dec. 18 and lost to No. 1 Illinois 89-72 on Nov. 27. The Bulldogs beat No. 3 Missouri 87-80 in overtime Dec. 13, 2003.

Batista, a junior college transfer, was pushed into a bigger role when leading scorer Ronny Turiaf was slowed by an ankle injury and got into foul trouble.

"I knew that Ronny was kind of doubtful for tonight and I had to prepare myself mentally to step up at the right times," Batista said.

Gonzaga coach Mark Few said Turiaf's ankle was at about half-strength and he was only using the senior to fill up minutes off the bench. Turiaf, who aver-

aged 20 points in Gonzaga's first 10 games, had 10 points in 18 minutes while others adjusted for his absence.

"I think our guys buy into their roles," Few said. "They understand their roles and they bring what they can bring."

Erroll Knight and Sean Mallon each added 11 points for the Bulldogs, who led by 16 early in the second half, but needed a strong finish to hold off the charging Cowboys.

Oklahoma State (9-1) pushed its way back into it with a 21-8 run that John Lucas III capped with a three-pointer from the left corner to make it 68-62 with 9½ minutes to play. After a 9-2 run by Gonzaga, the Cowboys drew to within a point twice but couldn't take the lead.

"They're just so tough," Few said. "That, more than anything, is what I'm most proud of — we matched their toughness tonight."



Gonzaga's J.P. Batista blocks a shot by Oklahoma State's Joe Graham during No. 12 Gonzaga's 78-75 victory on Tuesday in Oklahoma City.

No. 16 Iowa goes to inside game in victory over Air Force

The Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Facing a team known for its outside shooting, No. 16 Iowa decided to take the ball inside.

The Hawkeyes scored 48 points in the paint and took only six three-pointers Tuesday night in a 73-63 victory over Air Force.

Pierre Pierce led Iowa with 19 points and Greg Brunner scored 17. Pierce missed his only three-point shot and Brunner

didn't attempt any shots from beyond the arc.

The Falcons attempted 36 three-pointers and made 14.

"We thought if we could get them to shoot from 20 feet and we were shooting from two feet, we would have a very good chance of winning," Iowa coach Steve Alford said.

"In a game like this when you're playing the style we've played, I thought it was much

more important that we attack the paint and attack the basket," Alford said.

After leading 29-17 at halftime, the Hawkeyes (11-1) opened the second half with a 16-6 run. Pierce scored seven points during that stretch and gave Iowa a 46-23 lead with a dunk after a steal by Adam Haluska.

Over the next eight minutes the Hawkeyes padded their lead to 61-37 and appeared to be on their way to a comfortable victory with 6:36 to play.

The Falcons (6-5) responded with a 15-1 run. Tim Keller and Jacob Bartschi each hit a three-pointer, and Nick Welch and Antoine Hood contributed four points each.

A basket by Hood with 2:19 left cut Iowa's lead to 62-52. The Hawkeyes held on from there, giving 9-for-10 from the foul line in the final two minutes.

"We hadn't been shooting free throws very well lately, but we

made some big ones down the stretch," said Iowa's Jeff Horner, who finished with only seven points, but was 4-for-4 from the foul line at the end of the game.

Bartschi led Air Force with 19 points, including five three-pointers. Hood added 12, while Keller and Dan Nwaelele had 11 each.

In the first half, both teams were slow to recover from the long holiday layover. Iowa hadn't played in a week, while Air Force was back on the court for the first time since Dec. 13.

Tar Heels win 10th straight

The Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Jawad Williams scored a season-high 25 points and Sean May added 16 as No. 4 North Carolina had no problems after a weeklong layoff, beating N.C.-Wilmington 96-75 on Tuesday night.

North Carolina made its first seven shots — including four three-pointers — and led 19-3 after only 5½ minutes. Raymond Felton finished with 12 points and 10 assists as the Tar Heels (10-1) won their 10th straight.

Ed Spencer had 19 points for N.C.-Wilmington (5-4), which played without leading scorer John Goldsberry. He injured his right shoulder in the previous game.

No. 7 Syracuse 72, Albany 55: At Syracuse, N.Y., Hakim Warrick had 22 points and 14 rebounds, and Demetris Nichols returned to the lineup with 11 points to lead the Orange (12-1) after missing three games with a sore back.

Nichols had seven points in a 56-second overtime to give the Orange a 20-point lead over Albany (4-5).

AP Men's Top 25

No. 9 Georgia Tech 92, Lafayette 58: At Atlanta, freshman Anthony Morrow scored a career-high 20 points, including 11 in a late 27-3 surge by Georgia Tech (9-1).

Georgia Tech was leading Lafayette (3-7) 55-47 when Isma'il Muhammad dunked to begin the big surge with 10:55 left.

No. 11 Connecticut 73, Sacred Heart 55: At Hartford, Conn., Josh Boone scored 16 second-half points and finished with 30 points and 10 rebounds to help Connecticut (7-1) rally after trailing by three at halftime.

The Huskies put together spurts of 12-1 and 14-0 after the break to blow the game open.

Luke Granato led the Pioneers (1-8) with 19 points, but had only five in the second half.

No. 14 Arizona 79, E. Washington 45: At Tucson, Ariz., Chance Frye had 16 points as Arizona advanced to the championship game of the Fiesta Bowl Classic.

The Wildcats (9-2) will play

Richmond, a winner over Butler, for the title Thursday night. Arizona is 38-1 in its holiday tournament.

Paul Buttorac led Eastern Washington (2-9) with 10 points.

No. 17 North Carolina St. 84, Columbia 74: At New York, Camron Bennerman had a career-high 24 points and picked up the slack for foul-plagued Julius Hodge, leading North Carolina State in the Holiday Festival.

Bennerman had seven points in a 14-1 surge that gave the Wolf-pack (10-1) a 73-59 lead with 4:17 to play. Hodge scored 22 points despite missing considerable time in the second half.

Jeremiah Boswell scored a career-high 23 points for the Lions (6-3), who were leading 52-50 at one point in the second half.

No. 24 Maryland 112, Liberty 68: At College Park, Md., John Gilchrist scored a season-high 29 points and Nick Caner-Medley had 20 to lead Maryland to its fourth straight victory.

Ebene Ihekwe had 12 rebounds, and freshman James Gist scored 14 points for the Terrapins (9-2). Larry Blair scored 39 points Liberty (1-8), which has lost five straight.

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New Syracuse AD fires Pasquaoni

The Associated Press

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Syracuse University fired embattled head football coach Paul Pasquaoni on Wednesday, just three weeks after giving him a vote of confidence to return for a 15th season.

Pasquaoni was 57-59-1 and 6-3 in bowl games at Syracuse. But the Orange struggled to break even the past three years after going 10-3 and finishing 14th in the nation in 2001.

Outgoing athletic director Jake Crouthamel, who hired Pasquaoni to replace Dick MacPherson, gave his embattled head coach a positive evaluation after the Orange upset then-No. 17 Boston College in the season finale. That vaulted Syracuse into a four-way tie for the Big East championship and made the Orange eligible to play in the postseason.

Chancellor Nancy Cantor announced Dec. 6 that Pasquaoni would return for 2005, but 11 days later the university hired Daryl Gross as its athletic director and the Orange's humbling 51-41 loss to Georgia Tech in the Champs Sports Bowl apparently sealed Pasquaoni's fate.

The decision to fire Pasquaoni was made by Gross.

Petrino speaks with LSU

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Louisville football coach Bobby Petrino has met with LSU officials and the Tigers' job but refused to say if he expected further talks.

"There's no offer on the table," he said Tuesday.

College football briefs

The LSU job opened when Nick Saban left for the Miami Dolphins.

called his session with LSU a "preliminary meeting," is in Memphis, where the No. 7 Cardinals play, No. 10 Boise State in the Liberty Bowl on Friday.

LSU officials received permission from Arkansas to talk to Razorbacks coach Houston Nutt, an Arkansas spokesman said Tuesday.

Police: Vandy football player killed over 'trash talk'

TAMPA, Fla. — Vanderbilt running back Kwame Doster was shot to death after his friends and a group of other men exchanged "trash talk" about their cars, Tampa police said Tuesday.

Police continued to appeal for help in making an arrest in the Sunday morning shooting. Police said they have suspects, but need witnesses who might have seen who fired the fatal shot.

Doster, 21, was shot to death at a sandwich shop after visiting a local club with two friends about 1:30 a.m. Sunday.

While leaving the club, Doster's friends had a discussion with three other men about their cars, said Tampa police spokesman Joe Durkin. Both groups were driving what Durkin described as "show" cars, and the arguments centered on whose car was better.

Paul Pasquaoni

The two groups met again at a spotlight, where they again exchanged words and mean stares, Durkin said. The suspects were riding in an orange Infiniti.

Blocks later, Doster and his friends pulled into a sandwich shop. The Infiniti pulled up, one man got out and opened fire with a handgun, Durkin said.

Doster, who was sitting in the back seat of his friend's car, was killed with a single shot. No one else was injured.

San Jose State hires Tomey

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Dick Tomey, the career leader in coaching victories at Arizona and Hawaii, has been hired to revive San Jose State's struggling football program.

A school source, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed Wednesday that Tomey was chosen to succeed Fitz Hill, who resigned earlier in the month after four losing seasons.

The 66-year-old Tomey currently is the assistant head coach at Texas under Mack Brown, helping to prepare the team for Saturday's Rose Bowl. The Longhorns declined comment when a spokesperson.

'Monday Night Football' has lowest ratings ever

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The average national rating for "Monday Night Football" this season was the lowest in the ABC program's 34.5 years, though it still ranked among the top 10 prime-time shows for the 15th straight season.

The season average of an 11.0 rating dipped below 2002's 11.4 rating for the lowest ever. It was down 4 percent from last year's 11.5 average, which was the first year since 1994 that the average rating for "MNF" had not dropped. The program rated seventh in prime time and continued to perform extremely well with male viewers.

"The only thing that matters is beating your competition right now," ABC Sports spokesman Mark Mandel said. "It's doing what it's intended to do and that's beat its competition."

This season was certainly eventful for "Monday Night Football," which drew criticism from the NFL for a steamy opening segment last month with actress Nicole Sheridan, from ABC's "Desperate Housewives," jumping into the arms of Eagles receiver Terrell Owens.

"Monday Night Football" is heading into the final year of its contract with the NFL. The exclusive negotiating period for ABC and its broadcast partner ESPN, which began the Sunday night game extends for nearly another year. But there's been speculation that other networks might challenge for the Sunday night and Monday night packages.

NFL Briefs

NFL injury update

Injuries to prominent NFL players followed by team's prognosis. (See Friday's edition for complete injury report provided by the league.)

Cowboys: RB Richie Anderson (neck) out for Sunday.
Steelers: CB DeShaun Townsend (hand) out for Sunday. RB Jerome Bettis (ankle), doubtful. LB Clint Chatham (groin) doubtful. RB Clinton Portis (ankle) questionable. LB Kendrick Hall (groin) questionable.

Last month, the NFL agreed to \$8 billion in extensions with Fox and CBS to televise Sunday afternoon games for six more years. The deals also would allow the league to show better matchups late in the season in prime time.

Broncos put RB Hearst on injured reserve

DENVER — The Denver Broncos placed running back Garrison Hearst on injured reserve Tuesday with a broken left hand.

Hearst, a 12-year veteran, two-time Pro Bowler and 2001 NFL Comeback Player of the Year, was signed as a free agent in the offseason. He played behind Terrence Droughts and Tatum Bell, and finished the season with 20 carries for 81 yards.

To replace Hearst, the Broncos signed Johnathan Reese, who was with the New York Jets before they released him in September. Reese played at Columbia University in New York and was on the Jets' practice squad for most of the 2003 season.

Judge refuses to dismiss charges in ALCO case

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The judge in a steroids distribution case that has implicated several elite athletes refused Tuesday to dismiss charges against three defendants, but ruled they may argue that statements given to investigators were illegally coerced.

Those statements implicated several sports stars as drug users — including baseball slugers Barry Bonds, Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield, and sprinters Marion Jones and Tim Montgomery. No athlete has been charged.

Judge Susan Illston said there's a substantial dispute between prosecutors and the three accused men — Victor Conte, James Valente and Greg Anderson — over whether they were in custody when they were initially interrogated by investigators.

The questioning took place during Sept. 3, 2003, raids at the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative — a center headed by Conte and the home of Anderson's Bonds' personal trainer. Valente is a lab vice president. A fourth defendant, track coach Remi Korchemny, was not involved in Tuesday's ruling.

If the judge finds the men were under arrest during the raids, as

Sports briefs

the defendants allege, then defense attorneys will argue the statements were coerced because their clients were denied the right to consult lawyers.

Prosecutors argue the defendants were free to leave during the questioning.

Yankees finalize \$21 million deal with Wright

NEW YORK — Free agent Jarrett Wright and the New York Yankees finalized a \$21 million, three-year contract Wednesday, announcing the deal on the pitcher's 29th birthday.

Wright and the Yankees reached a preliminary agreement Dec. 7.

Since losing to Boston in the AL championship series, New York also has added free-agent pitcher Carl Pavano to the rotation and tried to work out a trade for Arizona ace Randy Johnson.

Wright was 15-8 with a 3.28 ERA for Atlanta last season, then lost both of his starts in the first round of the playoffs against Houston. The right-hander is 52-45 with a 5.09 ERA in a career that began in 1997 with Cleveland

and nearly ended because of shoulder trouble.

Ray sees NHLPA, seeking lockout compensation

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Veteran tough guy Rob Ray said the NHL Players Association, claiming he has been shut out of the union's lockout compensation fund as punishment because he said in October he would return to the ice if the NHL used replacement players.

Ray spent most of last season working as a TV broadcaster with his former team, the Buffalo Sabres, before signing with Ottawa in February. He played six games with the Senators, and was on the team's roster when it was eliminated by Toronto in the first round of last year's playoffs.

The 15-year NHL veteran is an undrafted free agent. He said Tuesday he was notified early last month that an NHLPA committee ruled he was not eligible for compensation.

NHLPA spokesman Jonathan Weatherdon declined comment Tuesday on Ray's suit, which was filed in New York Supreme Court in Buffalo.

The lockout entered its 104th day on Tuesday. Last month, the NHLPA began paying players

\$10,000 a month while they are

out of action.

Vazquez beats Simyan to retain IBF Jr. feather title

EL CAJON, N.Y. — Israel Vazquez handed top-ranked contender Arjorn Simyan his first defeat and retained his IBF junior featherweight championship by knocking him out in the fourth round.

Vazquez is 37-3 with 28 knockouts. Simyan slipped to 14-1-1 with seven KOs.

Austrian downhill Grugger gets first World Cup win

BORMIO, Italy — Austrian downhill Johann Grugger won his first World Cup race Wednesday on the course that will host the upcoming world championships, while overall Cup leader Bode Miller came in fourth.

Grugger finished in 14th, 55.77 seconds on the Stelvio, one of the most physically demanding courses on the World Cup circuit. Austria's Michael Walchhofer, the reigning downhill world champion, was 0.24 seconds behind in second, and countryman Fritz Strobl, the Olympic gold medalist, was third.

Also Wednesday, in Semmering, Austria, Marlies Schild won

for the second time in as many days, capturing a night slalom to go along with her World Cup slalom victory on Tuesday.

Schild won in a combined time of 1 minute, 35.49 seconds to the delight of 15,000 fellow Austrians on the Hirschkogel course.

Schild beat Croatia's Janica Kostelic by 1.04 seconds, who was followed by overall World Cup leader Tanja Poutiainen of Finland in third.

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Bailey's biggest features meeting with Manning

BY EDDIE PELLIS

The Associated Press

DENVER — A humiliating loss to Indianapolis in the playoffs last season made it clear the Denver Broncos had to change something.

That change is wearing No. 24 this season, and his name is Champ Bailey.

On Sunday, the Broncos play the Colts again in a game they need to win to make it back to the playoffs. It may also serve as the definitive test on whether Denver really got what it needed when it traded star tailback Clinton Portis for the shutdown cornerback.

"I wasn't here last year, and what happened last year doesn't concern me," said Bailey, who has consistently shirked discussion of who won and lost in the trade. "All I know is what we've got ahead of. All I can worry about is what we've got to do to win this week."

Bailey's impact has been largely debated in Denver and around the league this season.

He has three interceptions — not a high number for a cornerback — and the Broncos pass defense has stayed steady, ranked sixth in the league this year and last.

But almost everyone agrees statistics don't tell the entire story with a cornerback, especially a "shutdown" corner like Bailey, who doesn't get the ball thrown his way as much as most corners.

Bailey made his fifth straight Pro Bowl and started every game.

He was most visible when he got beat, and that happened on more than a few occasions — by Cincinnati's Chad Johnson, by Oakland's Jerry Porter, and by Kansas City's Eddie Kennison.

For the most part, though, he has done his job, limiting quarterbacks' choices by shutting off one side of the field. He has also been an exceptional run defender, something many top corners aren't known for.

"Obviously, Champ Bailey is a guy who can cover any number of guys," Colts quarterback Peyton Manning said. "He can play in the slot. He follows the best receivers."

Meanwhile, Portis has run for 1,315 yards and five touchdowns for Washington. The Broncos have found adequate replacements in Reuben Droughns and Tatum Bell, who was selected with the second-round draft pick the Broncos also received in the trade.

But Denver has struggled on third-and-short situations this season and ranks 30th in the league in scoring touchdowns inside the opponent's 20-yard line. Portis ran for 14 scores last year, and some wonder if his absence has left Denver's offense in a lull.

The bottom line is wins and losses, and the Broncos are 9-6. A win over Indianapolis would give them 10 wins — matching last year's total — and a first-round playoff game on the road, just like last year.

The Broncos finished with the fourth-ranked de-



Denver's Champ Bailey (24), defending San Diego's Eric Parker, has three interceptions this season but has been an effective shutdown cornerback. Bailey and a second-round draft pick were traded to Denver in the offseason for running back Clinton Portis.

fense last season, but the good numbers didn't hide the flaws, most of which came to the surface in the 41-10 playoff loss at Indianapolis.

Manning threw for 377 yards and five touchdowns. The most embarrassing moment came early, when Al Wilson, Kenyon Kennedy, Kelly Herndon and Lenny Walle watched Marvin Harrison make a catch and all fall to the ground, but never touched him. Harrison stood up and ran for a touchdown and a 14-3 lead.

"We weren't up to that game, I don't know why," Kennedy said. "We didn't play well in that last game and it was worse because it was the playoffs."

Since the Colts have clinched the third seed in the AFC and Manning threw his 49th touchdown last week to set the NFL record, Indy coach Tony Dungy may get his chance against Manning.

If the Broncos win, they could travel to Indy for a rematch next week in the first round of the playoffs. One way or another, it seems Bailey is destined to get his chance against Manning.

"He's done things you can only imagine a quarterback would," Bailey said. "One of his goals was to throw for 40 touchdowns and he did that a few weeks ago. That's amazing."

NFL statistics

AFC Individual leaders

Week 15 Quarterbacks

Receivers

Punters

Kicking

Defensive

Special Teams

Other

Notes

Standings

Transactions

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Free Agents

Draft Picks

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SPORTS



In New Year's Day bowls,
sixth-ranked Texas
has plenty at stake, Page 26

A case for the defense

Experienced,
playmaking
Pats poised
to repeat

BY BARRY WILNER
The Associated Press

They don't have the league's best record and they won't have home-field advantage throughout the playoffs.

Their secondary is banged up so badly that an undrafted rookie, a linebacker and a wide receiver have played significant roles in recent games. There are concerns about a no-name offensive line, and their best defensive lineman, Richard Seymour, injured his foot on Sunday.

Are the New England Patriots done? Hardly.

Indeed, the Patriots are in better shape offensively to win the Super Bowl than they were last season. And with all the adversity on defense, they've discovered that nearly every lineman and linebacker and back on the roster can contribute.

"Guys make plays," says strong safety Rodney Harrison, the glue of the defense. "There is more focus on what they have to do when they get on the field. They look around and see how everyone is making plays and they do it, too."

They did it against the Jets last weekend to secure a first-week bye, which they'll need to heal. And that victory came after an uncharacteristic meltdown in Miami the previous Monday — a loss that cost them a shot to stay in Foxboro for the entire AFC playoffs, unless Pittsburgh loses its first postseason game.

"This is a team with a lot of mental toughness that battles and has a lot of strong character," quarterback Tom Brady said, "and when you have that, you can feel proud at the end of the day."

The Patriots have felt proud while carrying the Vince Lombardi Trophy two of the past three years. They not only are capable of doing it again, but should be considered nothing less than co-favorites with the Steelers.

Here's why:

■ Corey Dillon gives New England a running threat it hasn't had since Curtis Martin left for the Jets in 1998. Sure, Antwan



KRT

Corey Dillon (28), who has rushed for a team-record 1,519 yards this season, has given New England the dependable running game it has lacked in recent seasons, diversifying the team's potent offense.



AP

Adam Vinatieri (4) has made two last-second, game-winning kicks in the Super Bowl, has made 31 of 33 field goal attempts this season and has converted 84 percent of his field goals the past four seasons (107 of 127).

Smith was a key contributor in the two Super Bowl wins, but with Dillon the Patriots can play any style on offense. Dillon, who has set a team record with 1,519 yards rushing, is powerful and has a burst. He's also a workhorse.

■ Brady's receiving corps is



AP

Fifth-year pro Tom Brady continues to enhance his reputation as a winner who picks apart defenses. Since becoming a starter in 2001, he has averaged 3,425 passing yards and 23.7 touchdowns per game.

even deeper than last year. One week, he'll turn to veteran Troy Brown — when Brown is not spending most of his time as a fill-in cornerback. Another week, it's Deion Branch. Or David Givens. Or one of the tight ends.

"It doesn't really matter which



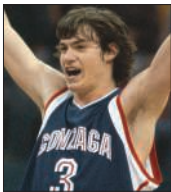
AP

Patriots head coach Bill Belichick is the architect of a defense that ranked first in the NFL in points allowed last season (14.9 per game) and is sixth this year (16.9) despite a rash of injuries that has sidelined several starters.

one is in there, I have confidence in all of them," Brady says. "They're all playmakers."

■ So is Brady, who never will pile up the kind of numbers Peyton Manning or Daunte Culpepper have this year. But he wins

SEE CASE ON PAGE 31



Upset specialist
Gonzaga topples
third-ranked
Oklahoma State

Page 28



Oregon State
extends
Notre Dame's
bowl-game losing
streak to seven

Page 27



Spurs, Sixers
defeat league
heavyweights
Suns and Sonics

Page 29

After 14 seasons, Syracuse fires embattled Pasqualoni Page 30